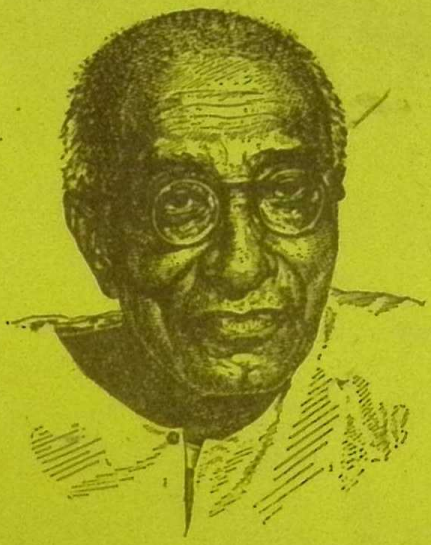

Jail Diary

C. Rajagopalachari

A day to day
record
of life in Vellore Jail in 1920

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Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan
K.M. Munshi Marg, Bombay 400 007

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[redacted]
FROM:
BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN
MYLAPORE, MADRAS-4

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R65

கோவிலார் ஆண்டவர்
A. No.....
நூலகம், கோவிலார்

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan
K.M. Munshi Marg, Bombay 400 007

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INTRODUCTION

On Tuesday the 21st December, 1921, in the evening around 6.p.m., Rajaji was locked up in a cell at the Vellore Central Jail. The place, then as now, is in North Arcot District of the then Madras Presidency but now of Tamilnadu. Vellore town, the administrative headquarters of the district, is about 140 km from Madras City where Rajaji lived. The arrest, trial and sentence of three months' simple imprisonment had come following Rajaji's defiance of the Government ban on public meetings; Rajaji had addressed a 5000-strong gathering in Vellore on the 14th of December, emphasising Hindu-Muslim unity and the importance of non-violence in the people's protest against the British Raj.

Earlier in November, following a country-wide hartal against the visit of the Prince of Wales on November 21, 1921, thousands of Congress workers and leaders of the Congress including C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai (President-elect of the Congress) and Jawaharlal Nehru, had courted arrest. On the day of the arrival of the Prince of Wales in Bombay, 58 had been killed in riots, much to the horror of Mahatma Gandhi, who had decided on launching the Non-cooperation Movement on August 1, 1920 -- the day Lokamanya Tilak, the indomitable fighter for freedom, passed away in Bombay.

Rajaji was then one of the General Secretaries of the Indian National Congress, Pandit Motilal Nehru being another who had already been arrested. Should the second secretary also go to jail? There were Congress Non-cooperators in Madras who were persuading Rajaji to desist from courting arrest. Rajaji thought differently and wrote to the Mahatma, "If I withdraw from disobedience it will demoralise the people." The Mahatma agreed. The sequel was Rajaji's defiance of the ban on public meetings and his arrest and detention.

Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (to give Rajaji's full name) was born on Dec. 10, 1878, in the Hosur Taluk of Salem District of Tamilnadu (then Madras). He was the third son of Chakravarti Venkatarya, the munsiff of the village Torapalli. Educated in his village and in Bangalore till his graduation, Rajan (as Rajaji the youngster was called) studied law in Madras and set up practice as a lawyer in Salem in 1900 -- he was then 22. Within two decades, Rajan became one of the best known lawyers in 'the districts of Salem, Coimbatore and Trichinopoly.' The successful lawyer became a member of the Salem Municipal Council in 1911 and its Chairman in 1917. Thus Rajaji shared in common with other Congress

leaders, notably Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbhai Patel and Subhas Bose, the experience of Municipal administration. There was, however, one point of difference. While the others entered the municipalities after being drawn into the Congress, Rajaji had it even before he was drawn into the vortex of the struggle for freedom. Rajaji moved from Salem to Madras City in March 1919 to continue his legal practice. But even before this he had become an admirer of Mahatma Gandhi and had even sent some money to Gandhiji in South Africa in 1913.

The year 1919 proved to be a turning point -- an anna mirabilis - not only in the country's history but in the lives of the great freedom-fighters including Rajaji's. Gandhiji had been very much exercised in his mind by the Government's proposal to introduce the Rowlatt Bills. One of them that had become the law, the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crime Act, 1919, provided for arrest without trial or enquiry whomever the Government suspected of sedition. On February 24, 1919, Gandhiji called for a pledge by the people to resist this oppressive legislative measure. Among the first few to sign the pledge in Ahmedabad were Vallabhbhai Patel and Sarojini Naidu. A Satyagraha Sabha was also started in Bombay. Gandhiji, on an invitation from Kasturiranga Iyengar, editor and owner of 'The Hindu,' Madras, arrived in Madras on March 18, 1919 and stayed with Rajaji, initially not knowing who was his host. On the fifth day of his stay Gandhiji got the idea of a countrywide hartal 'while he was still in the twilight condition of sleep and consciousness'. He told Rajaji :

"We should call upon the country to observe a general 'hartal.' Satyagraha... is a sacred fight ... let all the people of India, therefore, suspend their business on that day and observe the day as one of fasting and prayer... It is very difficult to say whether all the provinces would respond to this appeal of ours or not but I feel fairly sure of Bombay, Madras, Bihar and Sind."

April 6, 1919 was the day fixed for the hartal. Owing to lack of communication Delhi observed it even on March 30 and it turned out to be an 'unprecedented success.' April 6 found the country totally paralysed. "Every town and village in the country responded to Gandhiji's call. Peaceful demonstrations, processions and meetings were held everywhere. The authorities were startled by this spontaneous demonstration of the nation to resist the imposition of the hated legislation. This was revolt. They were, therefore, determined to crush the movement, letting loose a reign of terror" (Acharya Kripalani in his 'Gandhi').

The 'reign of terror' was seen at its worst at Jallianwala Bagh in

Amritsar on April 13, 1919. A crowd of about 10,000 that had gathered for a meeting was fired upon in the 'Bagh' enclosed on three sides by high walls and 'almost every bullet got a man' -- 379 were killed and 1100 injured, according to official figures. The Congress that met in Amritsar in December that year (the session that was attended by Rajaji) condemned the outrage and demanded the removal of the chief perpetrators of the atrocities in the Punjab -- the Governor Michael O'Dwyer and the Commandant General Reginald Dyer. Gandhiji had earlier taken up the Khilafat cause -- the fight for the restoration of the Khilafat to the Sultan of Turkey taken away from him by Britain. The special session of the Congress in Calcutta in September 1920, adopted the proposal for Non-Cooperation by 1855 votes to 873 -- there were many who were opposed to the Non-Cooperation Movement including the President, Lala Lajpat Rai. But the regular Nagpur session of the Congress in December, 1920, under the presidentship of Salem C. Vijaraghavachariar, a lawyer senior to Rajaji at the Salem bar, not only declared Swaraj as the goal of the Congress but approved the Non-Cooperation programme -- surrender of titles, boycott of foreign goods, withdrawal of students from Government schools and colleges and suspension of legal practice by lawyers, among others. Rajaji, who played an important part in the Congress constitutional reform, was also elected as one of the General Secretaries of the Congress at the session. As the General Secretary, Rajaji tried to visit Malabar which was worst affected by the 'Moplah riots' of August, 1921. He was prevented from doing so. Gandhiji too wanted to visit Malabar along with Mohammed Ali, but the latter was arrested. During his South Indian visit in 1921, Gandhiji, with Rajaji by his side, decided to change over to his 'loin cloth.'

With the country in a ferment, the protest against the visit of Prince of Wales in November (as stated earlier) was natural. When he was arrested in December, 1921, Rajaji carried with him a few books -- the Bible, Shakespeare, Socrates, Tayumanavar, Mahabharata in Tamil and English (P.C. Roy's translation) and Robinson Crusoe. He maintained a diary from the day he entered the jail to the day he left it -- Dec. 21, 1921 to Mar. 20, 1922. Besides his 'Jail Diary', he rendered into Tamil the 'Trial and Death of Socrates.'

The diary is not a sentimental record of a gregarious lawyer finding himself lonely in a prison. It is a record of events in his personal life as well as reflections of national developments of a mature mind. Rajaji, by virtue of his conduct in the jail, became an object of admiration of his co-

prisoners, the jailor and the English Superintendent. He was sought after for ensuring discipline even among non-political prisoners. But his jail term of three months was not smooth sailing. His health was none too good; he suffered from asthma, swollen legs and stomach upsets. The Mahatma wrote in **Young India** : "If the solitary cell is like anything I know it must be almost death to an asthmatic patient." But Rajaji was not the one to be daunted. He wrote in his diary : "Non-cooperation is not a means to a political end, but a Dharma by itself." "By our sacrifices," he recorded, "we have made the history of India in this generation an honourable chapter, a relief from the continuous story of surrender, indifference and dishonour." He was also prophetic : "Elections and their corruptions, injustice, and the power and tyranny of wealth and inefficiency of administration will make a hell of life as soon as freedom is given to us."

Rajaji's 'Diary' is a part of the history of the country, a document of great value testifying to the patriotic urges of a people straining at the leash. It is also the testament of faith of a warm-hearted person, bold, resolute, self-sacrificing and, above all, wise beyond his generation. Rightly has he been hailed as the Nestor of India and also as Bhishma Pitamaha, the grandsire of Mahabharata who combined wisdom with self-sacrifice.

JAIL DIARY

21.12.21.

I came, rather late in the afternoon on 21st December, 1921, into the Vellore Central Jail with Subramania Sastriar, our Provincial President. We were sentenced together by the Vellore Magistrate. Judgement was pronounced at 1 P.M. We waited for some time for our escort. While waiting I wrote a short letter to Mahatmaji. I said in it that three months S.I. was all too little. But I hoped he would have won Swaraj before January, and so it made no difference. When I came out I expected he would have finished Swaraj work and got back to his normal occupation, viz., Research in Dietetics.

We rode down to the prison in a motor car. Krishnamachari accompanied us, but we avoided all demonstration. I was weighed at the gate. My handbag contained a tin of tooth powder, some cloves, a quire of paper, a sheet of pins, some pencils, and a Fountain-pen; I had also a bottle of "Swan" ink, a kooja, a small brass cup and some books, -- the Bible, Shakespeare, Tayumanavar, a volume of Tamil Mahabharat,[1] seven volumes of P.C. Roy's Mahabharat and Robinson Crusoe. My glasses, both reading and distance, were with me[2]. My bed consisted of a pillow, a jamkalam and my shawl. My clothes were also rolled up in my bed. A case of ointment for my boils and a bottle of asthma mixture were also among my things. We were taken to the solitary imprisonment cells. The Superintendent walked down our block :

"Are you the sick man?"

"Am I put down as the sick man? Yes, I am."

"I don't know. You came in with a bottle of medicine. So I thought you were sick."

I explained my asthmatic troubles.

I then told him about my boils.

About my things, he said everything could go in except the ointment.

We saw Sesha Reddy, about whom we had heard, grinding corn. Two

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1 The ancient scholar who brought out this Tamil edition of the Mahabharat at great personal loss has just passed away.

2 My myopia is so heavy that I cannot identify friends at a distance of two yards without my glasses; and the lenses have to be deeply tinted to avoid the glare caused by the high power correction.

more Nellore non-co-operator prisoners (hard labour) were tearing old blankets to pieces and twisting woollen rope. They had happy faces. Sesha Reddy was a pious, manly, strong, well-built, dark, sturdy young giant. He bore marks of the recent assault which the Jail officials had made on him. I saw Rangam Chettiar of Narayanavaram reading Gita Rahasyam. We were told that for ten days we were to occupy each a cell in this line which was the block for condemned prisoners and solitary confinement.

We were told that till recently no water was supplied to the prisoners visiting the privy. They were using mud or nothing at all. Now water is supplied and this was said to be a reform due to the row kicked up by Sesha Reddy. Rangam Chetty had a mud pot and a dish also of clay. We were given an aluminium can and dish each. Washed them and had my first prison meal; rice and kolambu. The latter was made of radish root and leaves, greens and chillies, tamarind, salt and oil. The rice was too much for me, but it could not be enough for hearty eaters.

The old Deputy Jailor said that non-co-operators were giving trouble. "Why do you people come here? It is intended for criminals. What will be the result of it, do you think?" he asked. I said, "We will get Swaraj by January. Everybody will get honest by then."

The privy was clean enough – except for the flies – with chatties,* earth, spade, and a tank of water.

I feel it is a delightful place. The fear is only for people outside jail. Locked up in my cell at 5-45 P.M. The feeling was rather strange and new as, for the first time in my life, I found myself in a room which was locked from outside and the key carried away by somebody.

22.12.21.

THE feeling I noted last night soon gave way to quite another feeling. Have I really become so free that Government have to lock me up if they wish to keep me? For the first time in my life I felt I was free, and had thrown off the foreign yoke. These and other thoughts, and the early hour we were sent to bed without a light to do any reading or writing, and the physical strangeness of the place, kept me awake for a long time. I deliberately turned away from thoughts and memories of the busy world outside, and refused to give room for the thronging images of friends, children, and relatives. The national songs of my neighbours from Vellore

*Crude, unpolished, mud pots.

sweetened the hours for some time. Then the continuous 'All is well' sang out by the convict sentries with a variety of accents and vowel lengths filled the waking hours. I then slept off. I was free from my asthma trouble the first time after a week of much suffering.

Lakshminarasimha Rao and Venkatasubbayya are the names of the two Nellore Congress workers. They are in for one year for refusing to give security. The first was a medical student who joined Congress work. Bright, innocent youth encased in prison dress most incongruously! The second is a "school-final" youth. Sesha Reddy also is in for refusing to give security. He was a hungry giant and gladly took what I gave him out of what was doled to me. It was all too much for me and too little for him. I only asked for a broomstick, and he ran and cleaned up my cell, window sill, nook and corner, more completely than the best housewife would do in her own house.

Lakshminarasimha Rao brought my can and plate cleaned up and my kooja filled with water.

I would advise every non-co-operator to learn to sing a few songs before going to jail. I felt this was a great defect in my equipment.

Lakshminarasimha Rao and Venkatasubbayya were removed from this block this morning. Went to the well with a warder and had my bath in cold water and washed my clothes. I had no bucket or washing soap for the clothes. But I had a cake of Vegetol for my body. How I wish I had more strength of muscle to enjoy this life fully!

Two of us, Rangam Chetty and myself, came back to our cells leaving Subramania Sastry behind at the well as he had not yet finished his bath. The warder called an "overseer" to escort us to our cells. On enquiry, I found that this "overseer" who was to keep watch over us on our way back to our block had been convicted for dacoity! He had done two years and had three years yet. He was getting, he said, one rupee a month as pay, which was kept for him in the jail chest. Had breakfast at 11 A.M., and shared it with Narayanasami, convicted for receiving stolen property. I promised to share my evening meal with my neighbour, a Korava* thief. These poor devils are dreadfully hungry. Why Government do not provide buttermilk for prisoners, a cheap and healthy food, I cannot understand.

Our warder, Perumal, is an ex-sepoy who has been in service in Mesopotamia. He wanted to know when the struggle would end, to which

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*A 'Criminal' tribe.

I gave my answer : "Soon; sooner if everybody struggled harder." Government seem either indifferent or determined deliberately to treat us like common criminals in every way. Our food is the same as that of ordinary criminals, we are locked in and let out at the same hours, we have to eat on the filthy ground, standing, or sitting on our toes, and hurrying it off the plate, like beggars being fed.

But we are not going to break for all this treatment. Government does not know that this merely enhances our sacrifice, and strengthens our determination. Special comforts would undermine our strength in a subtle manner.

23.12.21.

Had slight asthma trouble last night. The evening meal does not suit at all. But I shall not bother about it yet. Very much missed our Nellore neighbours. The dark waking hours after lock-up at 6 P.M. were not relieved by their songs. The chattering warders kept the noise going in a tiresome manner. No good broom to keep our cells clean, nor any attention to cleanliness about our cells on the part of the jail authorities. Lucky there are not many bugs in these cells. But there are plenty of mosquitoes.

Yesterday evening a man stood outside the fence, as I was pacing up and down in the open, and did namaskaram to us. It seems he is a munshi to the Superintendent of the Jail.

Who is this Mussalman behind my cell continually lecturing in loud Hindustani, preacher-fashion?

In the early hours there was weeping behind my cell. Perhaps some condemned prisoners.

Khaddar is heavy to wash for a poor-muscled body like mine, with boils in the legs, and a pair of lungs that take to hard breathing too easily. As I am struggling with it, the warder tells me, "Your fate has become like Nallatangal's, in the story." I smiled and told him that it wasn't such misfortune.

Will God give light and courage and strength to our brethren outside? Little do they yet realise what their responsibility is. I see so many in the prison cheerfully toiling away like men 'to the manner born,' who have accepted a long year's incarceration and hard labour as an alternative for merely giving security, like Sesha Reddy and these two brave Nellore youths, whose figures with broomsticks in hand sweeping the grounds in

front of our cells saying, "Are we not scavengers?" can never pass away from my mind.

Their innocent undoubting trust in their brethren outside, on the strength of which they have left aged mothers and loved children for doing penance in the jails, is a thing not yet realised fully by the people. Otherwise they would not be so indifferent or so slow. Robinson Crusoe, after some time in his island, gave up looking out for any ship in the horizon. Have these too to abandon hope, like Crusoe?

At 5 P.M. to-day came in Fatekhan of Ambur, having refused to give security; one year simple. Short, nice looking man. I must record a sensation of great joy on seeing a newcomer. More must come in and rapidly, to end this great struggle.

24.12.21.

It is after I am locked in at 6 P.M., and my cell barred, bolted and locked and key taken away, that the full vision of freedom daily comes to my mind. Why do not people realise the fact that the nation is locked and imprisoned like this, not at 6 P.M., but every hour, day in and day out, so that it is one long night of slavery. Realising this, one feels free when one has actually to be shut up like this by the tyrant's arm that holds the country. The misery of it is when one sees one's own people so busy and so punctilious in carrying out the behests of that authority as if it were God's law and Dharma that they carry out. The man who goes to prison in revolt against the foreigner's law is free, even like the rebel soldier. He is to be held down by force, not by shameful, voluntary surrender. These things I knew before and have uttered them on platforms. But I realise them now more fully than ever before.

Fatekhan has brought with him three packets of candles. He gave me a packet. It will be useful.

I was given my medal this morning : 8398. 21.12.21 (date of entry), 20.3.22 (date of release), on a little wooden piece to be hung to the neck by a string.

My "History board" shows the following particulars : Political. Reg. No.8398. Date of admission, 21.12.21. Declined to appeal, 24.12.21. Name : C. Rajagopalachar, Brahmin, General Secretary, I.N.C. State of Education, "C" ("C" means illiterate. So carelessly are the entries made!).

Sentencing Court : Sub-Div. Magistrate, Vellore, C.C. 82 of 1921, 188 Clause 2, I.P.C.

Sentence	:	3 months S.I.
Date of sentence	:	21.12.21
Date of release	:	20.3.22
Age	:	42
Height	:	5 ft. 4 inches
Weight	:	104 lbs.

Rangam Chetty tells me he weighed himself two days before coming to Jail and found it was 142 lbs. His "History" shows 137 lbs. Fatekhan Muhammad Ghouse says he heard the man say 125 at the weighment at the gate yesterday. His "History" shows 120 lbs. Do they reduce the real weight by 5 lbs. for everybody to allow for loss during the early months of prison life?

At 10.30 A.M. we espied the Andhra n-c-o's at the well. We have not yet been allowed to meet each other. I saw them from our block and they returned namaskarams. We are taken for our baths at different hours so that we may not meet each other.

At noon to-day, the Superintendent, and another European clad in semi-military uniform, and the Jailor came round and "verified" our identification marks. I spoke to him about my evening meal being unfit for my asthma. He proposed putting me in hospital. I hope it will not be a change for the worse.

At the well, this afternoon, I saw many Moplahs among the gang taking water. Their faces lighted up as they saw me and heard me talk kindly. They were all of Malapuram. Returning to our block, I saw a man coming out of the privy. He accosted me in military style. I spoke to him and found he too was a Moplah. he enquired how the fight was going on. He agreed it was a mistake to have started violence. "They have arrested only 'sadhus' (peaceful people). Their idea is, it would be easier to deal with the fighters after taking us all. Are we to be here for five years, or is Swaraj coming?" These were some of the questions he asked. "We feel so cheerful and hopeful," he said, "when we see big and rich people coming into jail, like you. You don't know what we feel;" and the tears welled from his manly eyes. I answered his questions as best I could, and told him to have hope and courage. "The whole country is a jail," I said. "Yes" said he. "And we are inside a small prison," I continued, "the men outside are like dogs let loose by the master. We are like tigers kept inside barred cages." "Yes," said he, "they are dogs and we are tigers." We talked a good while, till a convict warder came and hurried him away to his task, which he said was grinding wheat in the store.

In the evening a Mussalman tailor from Chittoor came in for the offence of pasting notices for the hartal on the 17th. He is given R.I. for six months, for failing to give security.

I cannot stand the strain of washing clothes. I don't know whether the fact that I did it to-day in the afternoon made any difference. But while I did not feel more fatigue than yesterday and the day before, to-day I got to breathe hard and faint. I cheered myself up by sitting down and talking to a Moplah.

After lock-up to-day, as I sat inside the cell, an involuntary feeling of weakness and thoughts of my children seized me. It looked at first irresistible, but I struggled against it. Help came to me soon. "Have not people lived away from their dear ones for months and years on business and been perfectly happy? Have you not yourself been away thus? It is the mere thought that you are in prison that weakens you." I put these questions to myself and I gathered strength.

I daily do the *Gayatri* a hundred and eight times after nightfall. It was at first difficult to concentrate. But I find it easier every day. I hope to grow strong enough, by communion with the Highest, to break these prison bars. God has given me this great opportunity to purify and strengthen myself. How few in the world have suffered imprisonment for a good and just cause! Of these brave few, how few can our own motherland claim! Of these very few, I am now really one. It is a distinction which I must deem myself so lucky to have attained. This is pride, but permissible for a time so that I might grow strong enough to trust only in God.

Fatehkhan Mahomed Ghouse's candle lights my cell to-day. Never did I see candle give such quiet holy light before!

25.12.21.

The two greatest defects in my equipment are the ignorance of Sanskrit and music. Without these two, a life of quiet devotion appears almost impossible to a Hindu. With these two, the loneliest desert could be made alive with religion and joy.

This is my fifth day in prison. It is Christmas day for our rulers. May the Spirit of Christ purify their souls and give them Light!

Mahomed Ghouse has a strong constitution. He is bathing in the open in water which has stood in the mud pot overnight. A man who undertakes to fight by suffering must be sturdy like that.

Took only the water from the 'cunjee' and gave the rice away to the scavenger. The Chief Warder came with a grin. I told him I was taking my morning coffee. This was a joke pitched low enough for his sense of humour. I believe I will be starving myself this way, but it may be good on the whole to starve out the distempers I am now suffering from -- the asthma and the boils.

The Deputy Jailor has apparently been spoken to much by somebody. Much consideration and enquiry have resulted in more fuss than in anything done. However, he ordered some hot water for me to bathe. A pot came from the Jail kitchen. Naturally, the water contained a lot of dirt and, in addition, smelt of food-stuffs. However, I washed myself with it as I did not have a bath yesterday.

Accosted the Andhra group from over the railings as they were at the well to bathe.

A group of hard labour prisoners marched, with Vande Mataram, and clasped hands at me. It was pleasant to return the salute. I could see that these amenities and recognitions brighten life a little for these brave souls. Some of the Tiruvannamalai n-c-o's were in the group. My warder, Perumal, brought razor, brush, and glass from the Andhra block. Had a shave. Cut myself a little as I am not a good hand and the razor was blunt. In the afternoon, a whole barber was handed in, and Chetty and everybody else are having the luxury of clean faces. It may be asserted fairly accurately that the reputation of non-co-operators is, among all estimates, the lowest in the world in that of our Deputy Jailor. He has been made to believe that the jail was a paradise before, but non-co-operators have made it a veritable hell. He seems to dread nothing so much as a non-co-operator in jail. The poor man need not have been so badly treated. There must be a lot of misbehaviour on the part of himself and other jail officials. But an atmosphere of hatred and fear ought not to have been created. Indeed, it could not have resulted without lapse from the spirit inculcated by our Master. If they misbehaved, our duty was to correct them direct, face to face, and not hand them over or attempt to hand them over for punishment by their superiors. We have an opportunity in prisons to bring out the best in our principles and extort the admiration of the ignorant and the illiterate, and even of those at first ill-disposed towards us. The greater the evils, the maladministration, and the wrongs done, the greater the opportunity to bring out the soothing principles of our great Master. We have a duty by him inside jails. We ought to establish the superiority of his teachings even in the prison, which is a little degraded world by itself

where beasts are set to rule over beasts.

26.12.21.

Had my asthma trouble last night. I had no medicine. My cell is an oblong of about 11.1/2 ft. by 8.1/2. ft. with a single opening in the wall, high up on the east, about 6 ft. from the floor, with bars across, the opening being about 4.1/2 ft. by 1 ft. The roof is an arched semi-circle, the highest point being about 10 ft. high. The cell door is a barred affair, 6 ft. 9 in. by 3 ft. The cell is one in a long line of eighteen cells facing west, with a running varandah 5 ft. wide, and a fairly big open space in front, and a privy at the N.W. corner, and a big drain all along the western edge of the space. Behind the line of cells must be a drain just under our cell windows, judging from the occasional gust of urine smell coming in.* About four cells in our line at the southern end are occupied by condemned prisoners. These are let out periodically to wash their hands and mud pots and to take their food in. A tap is provided in the south-western corner of the open space, but the supply often fails. Water is brought and kept in a pot for us. Four trees -- two neem, one teak, and one arasa -- adorn our grounds. Beneath the big arasa tree, little brick and mortar blocks are provided for prisoners to keep their food on. The tree casts a good shade, but the crows are a nuisance. We are given each an aluminium dish and an aluminium can. We have to eat in the open, as best we can, standing or sitting on the earth. We have been using the sentries' little platforms for this purpose, which I suppose is a trespass. The privy is used not only by people in this block, but by a large number of prisoners coming from the other blocks.

Just before lock-up two unglazed chatties are placed in a corner of our cell by the scavenger. These are to serve as commode and chamber pot at night. Absorbent chatties without any cover for them, kept within four feet of our bed, do not make the place sweet.

They are not even always your commode or pot, for they are removed in the morning and mixed up with others, and are distributed again in the evening, not necessarily the same which you have used. I tried to use the one as a cover for the other, but the pots, having round bottoms, wobble on the ground too much to be put one on the other safely.

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*After repeated complaints to the warders in charge behind, who were the delinquents, this was stopped towards the end of my stay here.

We have, naturally, to put aside all sense of delicacy. I must record here that the prisoners, as far as I have seen, though they are long term convicts for grave moral offences, are well enough behaved and show little lewdness of spirit. Except for enforced loss of the sense of delicacy, I have not noticed any indecency.

The warders who watch the condemned prisoners fill the night with noise. They do not seem to realise that they themselves go, by turns, but the noise is continuous for the prisoners. Their vulgar chatter is specially irritating when it crosses the beautiful notes of our friend Mahomed Ghouse's prayers, which would be an elevating music for all the prisoners, if undisturbed. My washed clothes have come from the town. Also, in the evening, the jailor gave me the things I wanted him to buy for me out of my money -- white paper, clothes, candles, candle-stick and matches, soap and tooth powder. There is an abundance of good sandals made in the jail. I am buying a pair. The jailor has promised to shorten the strap for me.

Five fresh non-co-operators, I understand, have come and are in the quarantine outside. There is no reason why they should not have been taken into this block straight, as we were, unless they wish to isolate them from us.

A poor fellow from the Andhra country -- an ordinary prisoner, not a non-co-operator -- told me it was in the newspapers that Swaraj had come and depended on three years' good conduct. He must have heard something about some speech of the Prince, in which there might have been something about the goal of the Reforms.

The All-India Congress Committee, and the Moderate leaders, must be nearing the end of their deliberations to-day. May the God of Nations lead us aright and give us courage, determination and strength!

No newspapers are allowed to us.

I wonder how the Irish people have decided.

27.12.21.

The great ceremony is over. The Superintendent of the jail is to go round and see every prisoner on Monday, that is to say, he walks down each block and every prisoner has to stand in front of his cell with his kumbly and mat spread out in front. "Even your private bedding should be kept out," said the Superintendent to me. "If the ground is too dirty, you might put it out on the verandah." Yesterday being Christmas day, the inspection

was done to-day. I asked him whether we could have any newspapers. He said, "None at all." I did not remind him about his sending me to hospital, as I wish to leave things to their own course. The Superintendent ordered the removal of our Chittoor tailor friend, Chanda Mian Sahib, to the quarantine outside, 'being a rigorous case.' He is a brave, tall, sturdy man of forty-three. I had my doses of mixture last night and the spasms have been kept down. I have a new boil coming up in my right leg, which has suffered so much already. I had hoped it had got itself protected, but I see that the immunity does not last very long.

In spite of every discipline, every explanation to myself of the true nature of the prison and the condition of our country, a sudden weakness of heart, inexpressible and not subject to reason, occasionally siezes me. It is, I believe, my craving for personal affection. I see about me prisoners, warders, fellow non-co-operators. There is devotion, kindness and brotherliness, but no love such as my heart wants. This comes on me as a void now and then, and fills me with a kind of fear such as children must feel when they stray away from their mother. May the Mother of all created things give me courage and strength! All those who love me are still there, outside the prison, and they love me all the more for this separation. They continue even now, across the prison gate, to love me. May their affection be realised by me properly, in spite of the delusion of this strange situation, and keep me steadfast!

Locked in as usual at 6 P.M. Have secured my two doses of asthma mixture.

Only two things stand between us and freedom, -- fear of prison and fear of death. If but a large number of our people get into jail as we have done, the fear of prison will be gone entirely. Fear of death must be easily got over if we spend our prison time properly in a study of our great religion.

There was trouble in getting warm water. I understand it was not an officiallly sanctioned privilege. So I bathed in cold water.

28.12.21.

Eighth night in this ashram. I understand that we will not be kept long in this block. These cells are intended for condemned prisoners and for solitary confinement. For the latter purpose, there is a wooden door which has to be drawn against the railings to make it dark, and shut out all extra air.

There is much work to be done in the matter of treatment of political prisoners. They are treated, as far as I can see, in every way like ordinary, simple and rigorous convicts. There is absolutely no difference in the food or the discipline or the tasks set.

The Moplah Rebellion prisoners are heavily worked. It pains one's heart to see it, when one realises that they are here not for moral crime but for breaking bridges, pulling telegraph wires or cutting up roads in a bid for freedom and religion as they understood them from their leaders. The only consolation is that these Moplahs knew no better code of war than the treatment now meted to them by Government.

There is no place where the atmosphere is so full of expectancy as the jail. Every prisoner, as he is heaving up a heavy load, or finds a minute's rest when running down to the latrine, asks, how long are we to toil like this? when is Swaraj coming? are we winning? where is Gandhi? and so on.

The washing is too much, apparently, for me. I felt so fatigued to-day, that I could not eat well, and after that, had to be in bed till 2 P.M. How weak I have come to be! Age and sickness tell, even though you have not out-grown your youth in foolishness.

The food we get is a perfect discipline, as I told Rangayya Chetty to-day. How many in their own homes get less variety and worse quality? The Kolambu and rice for both meals every day, with innumerable varieties of dirt, grit, hair, wool and all sorts of things in it, seems to us so dreary, beacause we have coddled ourselves with varieties all our life, blind to the dreary lives of others around us. It is with such thoughts that we get cheerfully through our meals, -- the three of us, Sastry, Chetty, and myself, on the little sentry platform. Ghouse gets a different kind of rice and Kolambu. Caste and community pursue us even in these places. Jail people give rations much on the basis of caste.

I constantly hear the clank of bar-fetters on some poor Moplah prisoners. The Jail offcials brought me a requisition from two Dindugal friends, Thambusami Naidu and Natesa Pillay, to interview me. I wrote back a note, thanking them for their kindness, but begged to be excused saying I could have only one interview in a month according to the rules. I was quite well and happy and their seeing me would serve but little purpose. I understand the interviews have to be conducted across a wire - gauze screen. I am wondering whether I should ever exercise this privilege under these conditions.

Slave labour has not been abolished. The whole system of jail

administration is but a scheme of slave labour at its worst. Work is extracted from thousands of able-bodied men without being paid for, by the sanctions of pure brute force and cruelties, free from public observation or criticism. Even where cattle may and must be used, as for pressing oil or drawing the kavalai, a gang of men are made to do the work, because the slaves are available in such large numbers. I would not judge the system thus, if there were any idea of reformation along with these brutalities. But not only is reformation absent, but it is almost an article of the creed of all jail authorities that the convict is beyond moral redemption. No attempt whatever is made to reach his higher feelings or his soul. Indeed, nobody seems to believe that any convict has higher feelings at all or a soul. Therefore, I say, it is a mere factory for slave labour, giving the absolute minimum of food, and intending to get maximum work. The slaves are not owned, but hired for a limited period. So there is no abiding interest in their health or morals, but the largest use is made of them and good conduct is ensured only for the master's purpose, during a limited time, by strict overseeing and barbarous penalties, rather than by instruction or example, which are slow and tedious. The officials are typical slave drivers, the convicts are typical slaves. How can there be any moral development or regeneration in these circumstances?

29.12.21.

In spite of the mixture, the asthma spasms disturbed my night. I think it is due to the evening meal. There was a big quarrel among the warders. One, a Panchama, it seems, mocked at my neighbour Ghouse's loud prayers last night, and another warder, a Muhammadan, was incensed, but kept his wrath for the morning when it burst out in a terrible explosion. The result was an emphasis on the Panchama's caste. He seemed to repent his conduct, especially as he was in a sad minority, but the wrath of the Mussalman was unappeased. I explained to them both their respective errors.

There was never again any direct or indirect interference with Muhammad Ghouse's prayers.

Prison going by itself will not achieve anything, unless the heart partakes in it and not the mere body. A shake of hands or an embrace increases affection, but only if it is the outward expression of hearts that come together in love. An enforced or conventional embrace is a

worthless formality. Even so, if men and women of India embrace prison life, not because it is the present convention of patriotism but because they are drawn to it irresistibly, as to a haven of rest, from the painful condition of national servitude outside the prisons, then there is freedom for India through the prison-gates. If hundreds of men and women feel that the voluntary co-operation with injustice and national dishonour outside the jails is no longer tolerable, and accept imprisonment as a happier condition of life because it releases them at once from that co-operation, and if they feel that the privations and inconveniences of the prison are preferable to the sin and the pain of immoral co-operation with wrong outside, then it becomes true martyrdom, which cannot fail to produce its effects according to the laws of God. Even if there be no immediate national advantage resulting from it, each individual has the supreme consolation that he at least has released himself from the sin and pain of voluntary assistance in keeping this nation in servitude. If we believe in the creed of Ahimsa, and if we have faith in the law of love and suffering, this must lead to success. Short of yielding up our lives, imprisonment is the fullest expression of our revolt against the evil which we seek to end. The greater the privations in the jails, the more cruel the treatment, and the more complete the isolation from the outside world, the nearer to perfection is our release from voluntary participation in the evil system that we have resolved to isolate and destroy, and the more effective will be our sacrifice in helping to achieve that end. It is faith in this principle that enabled before our time the brave martyrs, whose lives we read of in western history in the struggles for freedom and religion, to be imprisoned in damp dungeons and withstand all the terrible tortures inflicted on them. We have not yet shown a hundredth part of the resolution and the sincerity of purpose shown by those great men, though the manner in which the nation is responding to the call is full of promise. The measure of our hope is not in the mere number of those that now embrace imprisonment, but in the cordiality of that embrace -- in the reality of the choice of imprisonment in preference to helping the continuance of wrong outside the jails. Flocking into jails expecting a mechanical result will produce none. Jail-seeking should be the symptom of the organism's revolt against its condition; then is the cure certain. How many who have now accepted imprisonment have done it as a moral necessity arising from their inner revolt against national humiliation, and not as a mere device for the embarrassment of the Government, with which they hope it will not be able to cope?

30.12.21.

The jail authorities seem determined to keep us in isolation from the Andhra group. We three, Chettiar, Sastriar and myself, have been here for over ten days, in the solitary cells along with the condemned prisoners and recalcitrant convicts; and there appears no sign yet of our removal to any other block, nor of me to the hospital. I understand that the two Aligarh young men and Lakshminarayana and many others are there. That seems to be the reason for keeping me away from hospital.

Have written a letter for sending home to the kids.

Some linseed has been just brought and I have put it on the new boils in my right leg. Washed my left leg with hot water and soap and put ointment. The best part of our discipline is the newspaper privation. Read little or nothing to-day.

31.12.21.

In spite of the clearing of the bowels, and two doses of iodide mixture, no sleep. The lungs gave trouble from midnight, and kept on till early morning. It is disgusting to record my physical ailments from day to day. How I wish I had a healthy body which could give free play to my spirit!

The Superintendent saw me to-day. He agreed that my evening diet should be lighter in bulk and promised to see if I could be given toasted bread. He promised also hot water for bathing. He is not in the habit of seeing his decisions worked out quickly. It is clear he has deliberately decided to keep me away from hospital and wants me to be attended to here, fomentation for the boils and all. He strongly recommended vaccine injections for my boils. So I had an injection this evening. I had also some sort of boric fomentation for my legs; the water gets cold in transmission from the hospital.

The Vellore friends have sent the spinning wheels and corded cotton. Chettiar and Sastriar are learning. Ghouse Saheb is a practised hand.

Wrote a letter to the children and sent it to the Superintendent for sending by registered post at my cost.

1.1.22.

Very little sleep last night. The injection seems to have given a slight fever. The asthma trouble too recurred. Took less cunjee in the

morning than usual and worked at the spinning wheel for some time. Tepid poultice and tincture iodine for the legs. Got both legs clean shaved.

The Deputy Jailor appears to have gone to Madras and probably heard his friends speak about me. He has come back and behaves in a friendly manner. The Superintendent appears to have ordered hot water for me. I got from the Deputy Jailor some oil and soap-nut. The warder lent the services of two prisoners to help me at my bath and I had a really luxurious bath in one of the store rooms. At this rate, I should be unwilling to leave the jail!

I understand now, that some Andhra friends in the jail made a special representation to have an interview with me, which of course was refused by the Superintendent, and on the other hand served to rouse his fears. Hence the deliberate isolation. Mr. Lakshminarayana has, I hear, been discharged from hospital. They may now let me in there. If I get my legs into a healthy condition and don't have these wretched boils, I could be a model prisoner.

2.1.22.

Fever. I did not take my rice, but drank some rice-water instead. In the afternoon I was removed to hospital. Muhammad Hussain of Lucknow and the Nellore youths are in the hospital. I am put on milk and sago. I could not manage the quantity, so put by the greater part of it.

Muhammad Hussain has a lot of complaints about the hospital. There is Hira Singh of the Lahore Conspiracy here. Also some Moplahs. The Mophlahs enquired how I came to be in jail. They say they could take four years gladly for the three months of mine.

3.1.22.

The fever left me at about 3 a.m., having been dosed with calomel and quinine. The hospital is a real addition to the terrors of prison life. It consists of three big rooms, and no small or special wards, with a verandah in front and another at the back. My ward contains twelve beds. The beds are all full of bugs. All the windows are barred and there is only one door. The place is locked up in the evening like the rest of the jail and the sentry shouts out his 'All is well' into our very ears. The front verandah is not left vacant but is used for cases needing fresh air. The back verandah is a general latrine during the night, i.e., from after lock-up at 6 p.m. Incessant making of water and passing of stools by all sorts of patients. There are

no commodes or decent chamber pots. Chatties without lids and general receptacles (big mud pots) are kept open the whole night. The place is a hell at night. But in the morning it is all cleared up and phenyl is liberally sprinkled and the Superintendent, who is an I.M.S. doctor, comes about 10 a.m., when he sees nothing needing reform. Why a few proper chamber pots with lids and good commodes should not be kept in the hospital, I can't understand. They would be a non-recurring charge and, for quite moderate expense, add much to the sanitary condition.

Early morning, the deputy jailor's kind offices brought for me a wheat cake from the Punjab prisoners' kitchen. A fine old Sikh, Nidan Singh is his name, greeted me with Bande Mataram and gave me the cake. I said I could not eat anything so heavy. But he would not leave me. So I took the cake and thanked him. The fomentation seems to have done my legs good. They are less painful now. The quinine and the fever, I don't know which is more responsible for it, has made me too feeble.

The paralysis case at one end of the room does not improve my spirits.

4.1.22.

Dr.---------- about whom, by the way, I must record with sorrow that I have seen few men more subservient to their superior officer and more callous to the spirit of the times, carried out the Superintendent's instructions. He pricked all the boils, pressed the puss out and washed the legs with lotion, applied mercury ointment and gave me an injection of vaccine.

I had no fever during the night and I would have had a good rest but for the bugs which invaded my bed in more persistent fashion this night than during the first night. They seemed to have taken some time to acquaint themselves with the arrival of the victim. Almost the whole night was spent in a contest with these terrible foes.

I understand Subba Rao and Venkat Rao have been put in solitary cells by way of punishment, the former for writing to the Superintendent threatening to fast, and the latter for standing with arms folded on chest during the weekly parade before the Superintendent. Few Europeans understand that there is no aggressiveness or impoliteness meant in folding one's hands over the chest. They don't know that it is an attitude of special respect among Hindus. Subba Rao, a young non-co-operator from Cuddappah, complained to the Superintendent that the jailor used foul language at him and when witnesses were insisted on, he cited three

prisoners who had been present. The prisoners supported Subba Rao; but the result was, the principal man among them was given bar-fetters for the offence of giving evidence against a jail authority. Subba Rao naturally felt that he was the cause of the poor fellow's additional misery and wrote to the Superintendent that he was going to inflict on himself a fast for the injustice of which he was the cause.

A carpenter spoke yesterday to me what typically represents the atmosphere in all prisons now : "When will all this end, sir?" "Soon," said I, "we should wait. But what is it you want to come to an end?" "When will what they all say is coming -- Swaraj -- come? When will this system stop by which they take three rupees worth of work from us every day and give food without enough salt, and whole dal* which is not boiled, and all for half a man's stomach?"

I understand about Hira Singh, though he himself cannot be brought to give information about it, that four lakhs was the amount of his property, all in money dealings, which was confiscated. When asked about it, he says "don't care" in Chinaman's English. When war broke out, he was deported from Hong Kong, where he was doing business since youth. He went to Bankok and escaped to Singapore, and returned to his village in the Punjab, where he was arrested and sentenced for life for conspirary. From Hazaribagh Jail he escaped, was again arrested, and is now here in hospital with a painful trouble which disables him from sitting. For six years, in Hazaribag prison, he says he never saw the sun. He was working, grinding corn, eating, sleeping, and doing everything else in a solitary cell till his brain got almost affected, he says. Now he is allowed to move about, which is a blessing. He is cheerful and brave. "Jail is my house," he says. "If I don't like anything, I don't do it. I take punishment. That is all."

"Without force no nation has got freedom. In China, too, it was the same. You cannot get the people to do the sacrifices of the non-violent method," argued Hira Singh. I tried to put it to him how (1) we were not fit for force, (2) we were not fit for civil self-government unless we were able to organize a non-violent revolt, and (3) how if the violence of a few people ever obtained freedom from foreign domination, it would result only in the government of India by a few people commanding such

* An abominable system prevails here, and I am told in other Jails also, of soaking whole unhusked dal in water, and then crushing it and making kolumbu with it. The concoction is extremely disliked by the prisoners and appears to be the cause of many stomach disorders among them.

violence, whereas a non-violent revolution would naturally lead to true self-rule by the people of India. But Muhammad Husain, who was acting as interpreter for me, was too ill to keep up the conversation. He felt giddy, and we retired for the night.

Raghavayya and four convict warders, Telugu people, have been removed from this jail to-day, the latter probably for suspected assistance to the non-co-operators. The former's case is not known -- whether it is a mere transfer of jail or warrant for a trial on a new charge. Sesha Reddy has been taken out also, probably for a trial on a second charge which has been pending at Nellore. The pain in my leg is so great that I can do nothing by way of reading or writing.

5.1.22.

Muhamood Hussain and I were permitted to sleep in the front verandah, comparatively free from bugs, and a little further off from chamber pots, at night. I had very good sleep in spite of the pain in the leg. It was a heavy sleep, probably the result of the injection.

Hira Singh told us last night the story of the Lahore Conspiracy Case prisoners. They were all in Hazaribagh in Bihar, given bad food and heavy work and terrible penalties, -- flogging, handcuffs, and chaining to the wall in cells in standing position the whole day, for a week during nights also, handcuffed sometimes arms behind and sometimes in front, chained to the wall on the tower to serve as an example to all prisoners, and so on. They were given gunny bag clothes which they refused to wear and underwent punishment. The thing became so intolerable when a Punjabi jailor came and took charge, that they resolved to make an attempt to escape and get shot if they failed. Three iron bars were procured for them by the scavengers, and one of them made holes in the cell wall near the roof, and some at night at the bottom of the wall. They kept chanting prayers aloud, so that when the sentry walked up and down the verandah he did not notice the noise of digging. When the work was finished, three of them got out into the verandah at night and caught and gagged the warder on duty, and took his overcoat and lamp. One of them put on the coat and sat down with the lamp at the end of the verandah, and the other two stuck on like lizards to their cell doors, awaiting the head warder. When the latter came, he imagined the warder on duty was sleeping and went up to call him. The two that were hanging on to the cell door went up from behind and gagged the head warder, who fainted at once. They

took the keys from him and went about opening all the cells. But they were now nearing 'change of watch' and were in a hurry. They also did not know the right keys and found it difficult to open all the cells. They released only eighteen in all. The party hastened to the prison wall and, standing one over another, pulled themselves up with blankets and let themselves down similarly on the outer side. Three of them had been told to watch the warder and head warder, but these got impatient and joined the rest of the party too soon. The warders somehow got rid of their gags and raised an alarm which brought a party in pursuit, when some of the prisoners were still on the wall. They had armed themselves with the cell locks which they threw at the warders, and one of them lighted a match and said half aloud "They are brothers, don't throw the bombs at them." It was dark, and the trick succeeded. The warders retired in fear of the bombs. Six of the prisoners injured themselves badly, as the man on the top of the wall attended more to lifting them up than to letting them down. They were in a strange country. Five of the men who had broken their legs hid under a culvert; but the village people discovered them and pointed them out to the Police who came in pursuit. Hira Singh was also hurt but he was carried by his companions. He was a heavy weight and begged his friends to leave him and save thmselves. The next day he was arrested at Arrah, and some more at Benares; only three finally escaped. The re-arrested men were tried, and to their life sentence was added an additional term, and they continued in the same prison. The jail punishments went on as before. They once again broke the prison bars, and told the jail authorities that they could escape if they liked, but they did not want to. They only wanted reasonable treatment in prison. Things were somewhat better after this. They were a difficult charge to the jail authorities and they had to get specially Pathans from the Punjab to serve as warders. After a period, the Bihar Government transferred the prisoners to Madras, and they are all now in various jails in this province.

Hira Singh had nearly five lakhs in money. About two lakhs or more, he says, has been taken away by Government, and the rest is with Chinamen and others to whom he has lent money. "Jail has become my home. I don't want o go out unless India is free. But it is very difficult for India to become free. It will take at least two more years for the people to rise," said he in a tone of sorrow.

We all prayed to God, each in his own way, after this story and retired to sleep. The morning is bright. The hospital floor is being cleaned up and the convict attendants are moving about busily, as usual. Everything goes

on in the routine way. No news. The Sub-assistant Surgeon will come presently, and the Superintendent too, and enquire about our health. When, O Lord, will You give to our people the hunger and the passion for freedom? The human soul has a wonderful potentiality and if God only wills it, our people can be electrified into action never dreamt of as yet. We in prison can only pray and wait.

6.1.22.

Rangam Chetty came to hospital yesterday. He had a long story to tell of the persecution by the Jail officials since I left that block. The Deputy Jailor and the chief warder stopped the oil for his lamp and refused to give it in spite of his protest that his bowels were bad and he needed a light to guide him to the chamber pot at night. He stopped taking the evening meal so that his bowels may not give him trouble during the night. Thereupon he was summoned to appear before the Superintendent for the offence of not eating, but was finally ordered to go to hospital. Sastriar was spoken to harshly and insultingly by the chief warder -- "Stand up at the door when I come. I am a superior officer. You are a convict," and so on.

We came to jail voluntarily and we must submit to such discipline, harsh treatment and, I would add, insults such as we would subject all the prisoners to, if we had charge of the jail ourselves. We should not ask for any favours; for with favours come the frowns also. Let us compare ourselves with the Punjab prisoners who, for love of country and honour, are serving out life sentences bravely and cheerfully. There are Moplah prisoners who are serving, for their faith, sentences of four and five years and more, and are treated like common felons, and patiently bearing it as if meekness were their very nature. What is our insignificant share of suffering compared to these? Should we not bear them without complaint?

The jail officials have, for the first time, to deal with a number of people other than felons and degraded characters. We should allow for this and bear with them. We can make them see a new world altogether if we impress them with our meekness and our courage. Our attempts at prison-reform by complaints will only lead to the creation of an atmosphere of mutual ill-will and hostility, besides being futile in achieving any immediate object. Higher authorities will stand by the jail officials, whatever be the faults pointed out.

I was pained to the quick to see an exhibition of brutality on the part of the Sub-assistant Surgeon who, for some cause which I did not perceive, wrung the ears of a moplah patient. To the brutality was added the ridiculousness of this little man armed with brief authority by a foreign Government and secure in the secrecy of a prison, imposing his little physical strength on a brave soldier who is probably here after risking his life before the machine guns of Government's military forces, and is placed under the little man's charge because he is sick.*

The mercury ointment has overshot the mark. It has blistered my legs terribly. The doctor's attempts at doing good by hot fomentation was excruciatingly painful. He has added to the tortures by applying carbolic acid to the ulcers. But I am not here as a patient. I am here primarily as a prisoner, and it is grace on the part of the Government to take any trouble about my body. If they torture me for my ignorant over-application of mercury ointment, it is an unintended form of that violence which they would be entitled to apply directly if they liked, after passing the necessary legislation, Abdul Subhan of Tiruvannamalai, brave youth, who has one year's rigorous substantive, and one more year rigorous in default of security, two years in all, on a charge of rioting and picketting, has come to hospital with fever. He and two others of Tiruvannamalai refused to defend themselves. Satyamurthy appeared for other accused persons in the case and, it is said, offered to defend these men also, but they refused to utilise his service.

Sreeramulu of Bezwada has come also with pains all over the body. The little surgeon was particular in seeing his bed placed at the extreme end of the room, away from us -- Muhamood Hussain and me. Just had news that the Moderates are meeting on the 13th inst. at Benares and that there will be some sort of 'Conference' at Madras on the 17th.

7.1.22.

Sreeramulu says that the political situation is miserable, that Gandhiji is "sitting in Ahmedabad", the Congress has done nothing, that there is no good being in jail, and so on. I asked what right he had to expect that the world would go into an earthquake because some of us had come to jail? What had he himself done, when he was free all these two years of intense stir? What had he and the others done when Tilak was in jail for

* I learnt afterwards that the man was not one of the rebel prisoners. He was an ordinary Moplah convict transferred to this prison. This, however, makes no difference.

six years? I told him there was no use being impatient and that we can but do our own duty. Even if we achieved nothing in our generation, we had a duty which we should cheerfully perform. Freedom is often attained by the sacrifices of successive generations, and we should therefore be prepared to lay at the altar of the country what we could give or suffer without hungering for immediate fruit, -- even if we do not feel we are able to reach the Gita ideal of duty without concern for results altogether. Think where we should have been if our fathers and grandfathers had made definite sacrifices for freedom's sake. Would we not have then carried forward the battle with greater faith and vigour? By our sacrifices we have at least made the history of India in this generation an honourable chapter, a relief from the continuous story of surrender, indifference, and dishonour. Even this is an inheritance for our children. So let us not lose faith.

Yesterday I met Harinam Singh who was in the Komagata Maru. He told me the story of the Budge Budge affair.

The convict 'overseer' Parasuraman has finished his Ramayanam and lent the book to me. He has taken the volume of Tamil Mahabharatham. Muhammood Hussain is studying the Gita and is doing it with great deligence and respect.

Sreeramulu is positive that Subba Rao and Venkat Rao are kept in close confinement in solitary cells, locked in, both day and night.

8.1.22.

Ramamurti came with a sick headache and is in bed in hospital. Saw Shafiuk-ur-Rahman of Aligarh College, and Narasimhachari, Vakil of Guntur, at the hospital office. What a bright and innocent face Shafiuk has!

The man below in the verandah has pneumonia and is luckily looked after by the fellow prisoners on duty with some diligence.

Related the story of Savarkar's arrest and escape, and the Hague proceedings, to Md. Hussain and Rangam Chetty and others, who had not known it.

Had a discussion with Md. Hussain about the true basis on which the agitation and education for freedom should be based, not on atrocities and injustices of the foreign rule but on the inherent right of every nation to rule themselves, so that even if the British Government were to become the best in the world, and there were no Punjab or Malabar atrocities, we

were still bound to fight for self-rule.

Ramamurti was vomitting the whole night. Hanumanta Rao and Md. Hussain were sitting near him, soothing and helping him. Dr.---------- came up at night and fell upon poor Hanumantha Rao. "Who is that fellow sitting there?" "I don't want you here." "I must turn you out of the hospital," and so on. And then he told Ramamurti to call for the hospital orderly or *jadmali* if he wanted anything, and so on. This man's heartlessness and little-mindedness surpasses my worst estimate. He has lost himself in the idea of prison authority. He is more a jailor than a doctor, and more a tyrant than anything else. I never thought that an educated young man could be so little-minded. But such is the force of environment.

It seems Block 1 is locked up even during the day so that the men have hereafter no exercise or walking space. Rigorous imprisonment is far better than simple imprisonment under these circumstances. But we are here to accept any conditions of jail life. If we show unhappiness over any of the rigours imposed, Government wins. They seek to cause pain, and if we are miserable they have attained their object. We can defeat their object only by cheerfully accepting solitary confinement, all day lock-up, and everything else they have the power and the audacity to impose. Only let us not deserve such additional penalties by any dishonourable acts. Md. Hussain told a good story how Bahadur Shah smiled ~~when a British~~ Officer brought his son's head on a charger and offered ~~it~~ as a present to the father. His attendants afterwards asked the imprisoned Emperor why he smiled when his dear son's head was brought to him in cruel mockery. He answered that the object of the enemy was to cause pain, and he should not help him to attain that object by showing any grief.

I learnt from Shafiuk, who had come to the hospital for medicine in the evening, that they have not yet begun locking them up during day time.

9.1.22.

We cannot be said to be unhappy at all in jail. At any rate it is difficult to realise that we are in prison and are not out enjoying a holiday, since we half a dozen in hospital sit together after lock-up and talk away about the storied past.

Often the thought occurs to me, how am I going to provide for and do the necessary duties by my children and those left behind by my deceased brother? But the thought serves only to distract my mind and I cannot but

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leave things in the hands of God.

I was surprised to learn that Md. Hussain is only nineteen and Shafiuk only twenty. They are so much more mature in body and mind than our lads at that age. Md. Hussain is studying the Gita and spinning most devotedly.

10.1.22.

Tuesday. I understand the locking up order is being put in force in the First Block since yesterday, and they are let out in the day at fixed hours for necessary purposes.

Rangam Chetty is so particular about little causes of complaint that all the attendants are up against him. After all, complaints on our part come, in the result, to be complaints against fellow prisoners, for all the work is done by prisoners. The advent of educated men in prisons should not be a source of disgust or annoyance to the fellow prisoners as well as to the prison officials. To the latter we are an eyesore, for they find it difficult to have their own way with us; but why should we get to be disliked by the poor imprisoned slaves? We should bring the balm of culture, good feeling and hope in their midst and not be a cause of additional torture.

Non-official visitor Adiseshayya came this morning and stopped a few minutes at my bed-side and enquired who I was. He seems bent on looking into the *Kolambu* question. I told him that 4 oz. of dal, if it really reached every prisoner, would be a good ration, but now it apparently stayed away as sediment of some sort or other! The gentleman was here at 10 A.M. So the Kolambu to-day was good. (That is Rangam Chetty's report. I take only a little of Nidan Singh's dal and no Kolambu.) In the evening the thing got back to its usual horrid condition. Mr. Padmanabha Naidu, another non-official visitor, came here a week ago. There are, I learn, six non-official visitors. They seem to have no time generally to come to the hospital, and no time to stay and enquire even if they come.

Hira Singh told us last night a true story, of which he was an eye-witness, of the execution of a dacoit in China. The head was cut off, and three men fired into the beheaded man's trunk with rifles. Then the chest was ripped open and the heart was taken out. The head and heart were to be hung up along with a tale of his crimes in the market place. The high officers and other gentlemen who witnessed the execution came forward to take slices of the dacoit's flesh, and the chief officer, who was Hira Singh's friend, took away the entire heart. The head only was hung up for

public view in this case. When a brave man's flesh was available, it was taken by the Chinese in this way. Hira Singh was witness to the fact that the dacoit's heart was cooked and eaten in the house of his friend, the officer. He was also asked to partake of it, but of course he refused.

It seems everything is eaten in China except three things -- rats, donkeys and cats. Dogs are eaten and dog flesh is sold in meat shops.

The convict-overseer Parasuraman who gave me the *Ramayanam* has served in China and East Africa. He said pathetically that throughout the war he was not hit by any bullet, but when he came back he was a victim to a false charge of culpable homicide. He will be released in a few months. He is an extraordinary good fellow.

11.1.22.

Wednesday. Md. Hussain was discharged from hospital and has gone away to his block. He has taken the Gita with him. Barrister Lakshminarayana came to hospital yesterday. It looks as if the non-co-operators practically monopolise the hospital. Mr. Lakshminarayana gave a long account of the work himself and his friends did in detecting the administrative crimes in the jail and in the reformation of the jail atmosphere. He said brutal beating which was once very prevalent had stopped since their advent.

The other Sub-assistant Surgeon has come. He seems to be a less talkative man than his brother.

Read the Golden Treasury Series' Introduction to the 'Trial and Death of Socrates'.

Krishnaswami has written a post card to the Superintendent to know the rules as to interviews. He has written it on the 3rd January, that is, a little before my letter reached them.

12.1.22.

Thursday. Had a discussion with Lakshminarayana as to his proposal that we should fast tommorrow for the Prince of Wales's arrival at Madras. He finally agreed this morning to give up the idea. He is unconvinced, but only yields to my opinion. The hartal and refusal to participate in the welcome are demonstrations to show that the people of India are not happy and contented as the Government of India may seek to make out during the Prince's visit and attendant festivities. We have by

our very entry into prison done what we can to demonstrate our state of mind. It would only emphasise an unintended personal hostility to the Prince if we in jail fast on the day of his arrival in our province, as if it were a day of grief. The country is no doubt observing hartal and we in jail cannot participate in the hartal; but there is no reason why we should invent some other method of showing our disapproval of his visit. At any rate I feel that fasting should be reserved for greater things and for occasions of special and great grief and for self purification. The Prince's arrival is an occasion for mere demonstration, not of grief but of disapproval. He is not personally associated with any special evil done to or by ourselves, which may be a reason for taking to the extreme form of national penance.

Had the asthma fit last night; had been free till then since coming to hospital.

Hira Singh is right when he observed last night that India is greater than other countries in three things : Piety, Hospitality, and Chastity of women.

Dr. Rajan and others seek to see me, and have written to the Superintendent. Have requested they may be informed that I wish them to communicate with my people at Salem and come together with them some time before the 20th, when my first month expires. I understand we are allowed one interview a month, and also one letter, either way, a month. Md. Hussain and Narasimhachari bitterly complain that they have no fresh air or exercise, being locked up the whole day and night. They are only let out in the morning to visit the latrine, and this is claimed to be exercise and fresh air!

13.1.22.

Friday. Spinning, and Socrates, most of the time. Discharged from Hospital and removed to old solitary cell.

I find that the new orders are in force here also for locking up cells both day and night. It is atrocious that we should be thus locked in single cells, i.e., condemned to solitary confinement. Men sentenced to rigorous imprisonment are freer, in that they have to work in the open. We who have come here, believing in the efficacy of suffering, should deem ourselves fortunate in that we are made to go through the most atrocious forms of imprisonment.

But think of the barbarity of putting any perosn because he is convicted

of a moral crime -- let me talk, not of political prisoners, but only of those who have been found guilty of a deviation from the moral law -- in a room 10 ft. square, depriving him needlessly of God's light and air and sky. An ignorant doctrine might lead men to isolate criminals from society; but what doctrine, wise or ignorant, can justify the deprivation of those things that are necessary for the sustenance of healthy physical life? Here is a big open space in front of the cells, barred and protected and watched in all manner of ways, which is not needed or used for any other purposes, but from which you are locked out as if out of mere revenge. I should unhesitatingly condemn this as base and revengeful inhumanity, even in the case of the worst criminals, and I should make no point of the fact that this cruelty is practised against gentlemen convicted for political work and persons who have voluntarily sought imprisonment. It would be like claiming good and healthy water to drink for political offenders, as if regular criminals might be left to suffer in thirst, or drink contaminated water.

14.1.22.

Saturday. Asthma again last night.

My neighbours, B. Venkatappa and Alaikutti, a moplah, are suffering solitary confinement, the former by judicial sentence and the latter as jail punishment over and above the ten years R.I. that he has for homicide. But except for the coir spinning they have as labour, I see not much difference between them and me undergoing simple imprisonment, so far as the cell confinement goes. It cannot be that this is intended. It is best I ask the Superintendent and make sure. Of course we are here to undergo everything inflicted of purpose, but let us not give room for the plea of "mistake." Locked in at seven in the morning, after being let out a little after six. Let me now spin for myself in my cell while Alaikutti twists rope for Government in his.

Strange whispers reach the jail from the outer world; shadows would be a better analogy than whispers, for you can rely on jail news only as little as you can judge the shape of objects from their shadow. Exaggerations are the nearest approaches to reality. I am told the Madras City Police have been on strike these ten days; that there was a successful boycott and, in fact, utter darkness and silence in the city of Madras on the day of the Prince's visit; that there were street lectures at all corners; that at one place a disturbance was caused by a "government-side" Chetty talking inso-

lently about Swaraj, and soldiers came up and there was firing and six deaths. That there is a battle going on at the N.W. Frontier and the Government has had heavy losses. That in Malabar the operations have not yet terminated. I understand that Mrs. Lakshminarayana with some friends came this morning and had an interview with her husband in the hospital.

At 3.15 P.M. news was brought to me that Dr. Rajan and others were waiting to see me. I had a talk with him. My son and brother had come also. They were cheerful and brave, which was all I wanted. I am glad to learn that picketting work is going on in Salem though I did not like the news that many shops were burnt down. Honest Vasudevayya has gone in for six months rigorous; Anantachari is in remand. Ramakrishnayya and another Mussalman have also got six months' simple for disobedience at Tirupattur. It is something. I wish very much that more people carried the war into the prisons. It is the only effective thing we can do in Tamil land. I am told I am again appointed General Secretary along with Nehru* and that V.J. Patel is acting for Nehru* and Dr. Rajan officiates for me. Gandhi is appointed 'Dictator', i.e. to carry on all Congress work irrespective of meetings. This is good, but he won't find his successor easily or even with difficulty. There is a Conference at Bombay of persons of all shades of opinion and Sankaran Nair is presiding. Gandhiji is attending. I fear, rather I hope, nothing will come out of it, for I don't believe there is anything good that can come out of such a meeting. Nothing is possible in any direction from such a meeting, but cutting down our demands or suspending the Congress programme, which is unthinkably wrong just now, when victory is nigh.

Rajan tells me sad news about Madras during the Prince's visit. Intimidation reigned high. The hartal was successful but aided by intimidation, at least, to some extent. This was surprising to me because on all former occasions hartals were easily organised and were successful without any violence or intimidation. This time I am told that there was plenty of counter work and in order to meet this the people appear to have been tempted away into the wrong path. A big crowd assailed the Wellington Cinema which had hoisted loyal flags. Dr. Rajan says that the police and soldiers behaved very well. But a man belonging to the Cinema Comapny fired a revolver and killed a Mussalman from Triplicane.

I was glad to learn that Ramanathan is working at Madras in charge of

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* This is Motilal Nehru.

volunteer work. Rajagopalan did not go to the Congress. I told Dr. Rajan to go on a tour and push forward the work.

I understood that the *Swarajya* was going on and its subscribers' list had increased. The *Independent* was stopped. Mahadev was awarded eighteen months. Devadas was editing a written weekly newspaper and had a corps of a hundred volunteers to make copies.

I was told that Mr. Andrews had seen Malabar and had gone back to Gandhiji, that Wari Kunneth Mahammad Haji had been captured. With his capture the rebellion must be taken as ended.

Non-official visitor Mr. Duraisamiah, in faultless dress, came up as I was returning from the gate after the interview. He enquired about my health and food. Told him about the single cell locking up, asked him to enquire whether it was intended to give us solitary confinement or whether it was a mistake. He said he had noted the matter but I fear nothing will be done by him.

On the whole, the peep into the outer world given me through Dr. Rajan did not gladden me. The people do not realise how near they are to victory and have not yet made up their minds to put forth a supreme effort. May heaven give them the wisdom to sacrifice and fight for all they are worth! The news about the Andhras is invigorating. I am told that they have begun non-payment of taxes in some Taluks.

15.1.22.

Sunday. I learnt yesterday the disgusting news that N.S. Ramasami Iyengar gave an abject apology in the sedition case against him, and agreed that he would abstain from politics for a year, and got acquitted. How any man with his previous history and position could bring himself to such utter surrender, open and degrading, I cannot imagine. After this, nothing can be safely put aside as impossible. Heaven should protect us from weakness and keep us in the path of courage and patriotism.

There is nothing like temporary privation to make one enjoy and appreciate the real beauty of the simple essentials of life. In the unbridled licence of ordinary life in these days, we have lost the capacity for real enjoyment of simple things and hanker for more and more complications. With all that there is no satisfaction. Occasional strict privation gives a tone to the system, both physical and moral, by giving an appetite for essential things. I never enjoyed mere light and fresh air and a simple stroll in the open as I did this morning after my cell door was opened. I never

understood the beauty of the taste of simple foodstuff as I do now in prison. The exaggerated horror with which imprisonment is looked upon is as foolish as it would be to consider occasional fasts and retirements from busy life as great misfortunes.

Sundays, and other holidays, are in the nature of things the opposite of pleasant for us people under duress. All the warders and officials go home much earlier than on ordinary days; so we are hurried through our meal and the washing of our dishes. With a little imagination we should be able to submit to this cheerfully, and even actively help to close early, and send the poor devils to their homes, to their children and womenfolk, as soon as possible. The life of the warder is little better than that of his fellow inmate, the convict. The convict has his rations free, but the warder gets perhaps nothing more in the shape of wages. His fear of superior officials and their arbitrary exercise of powers, is not less than that of the convict. Perhaps the warder's anxiety is greater. His life is on the whole a miserable one, though he takes unconscious vengeance for it by brutality towards the poor devils, the convicts. "Give us Rs.30 a month, we shall be happy. Let Gandhi give or the Government, it does not matter. We shall gladly take a few rupees less from Gandhi than from the Government." This is their proposition.

The hospital is a regular hell for bugs. I am told all the wards are the same. In the blocks there are lice and fleas, besides. The prisoners' blankets and clothes see washing only once in a way and as for a bath, it is hurried through in a crowded competition, and in quantities of water which it would be a real miracle for a man, who has not seen a jail, to see fully flow over body and cloth. There are taps and beautiful-looking enclosures with shower-bath pipes overhead, which may please a visitor, but the latter do not work. My cell and the other cells in this solitary confinement block are comparatively free from bugs and lice. There is no furniture but only a brick and mortar platform for bed, and the roof is an arched masonry work. The door is of iron-bar frame. There is no crowding, hence the place is free from vermin. My life in the hospital was, during nights, a continual bug-hunt. In this respect my solitary confinement cell is a blessing, but the flies are a great nuisance. These poor fellow-denizens of the British prison would be quite welcome to share my board and lodging, if only they gave up some of their bad practices. If they promised to live with me entirely and only on rice and *kolambu* or on my milk and sago, I would gladly share my meals with these poor hungry things. But as it is, their taste is all-embracing and vulgar, and I have to

keep a vigilant watch against them, much against my will.

I am keeping my chin smart and smooth-shaven, as if I have city company to meet, with the help of razors, blunt and painful though they may be, borrowed from block I, where the Andhra friends are lodged. The jail barbers are a terror. I think I saw their equal in the outer world in only one man in Salem recently. The good barbers do not come to jail. They seem to be either too virtuous or too clever to be caught.

The Brahmin cook is as bad as his professional counterpart in the outer world. The rice and kolambu are unparallelled for dirt, hair, wool, sand, stone and horrid taste. The cook is not responsible for the cleaning of the rice and other stuffs and no one is responsible for the taste. The Sikhs have got one of themselves to cook for them, Nidhan Singh. He has but little assistance. But he gets the rations correctly, does not allow others or himself to steal, and he cooks clean, and puts his heart into it. But it is unfair to compare a poor convict Brahmana cook with a gentleman from the Andamans with a life-term hanging round his brave neck for conspiracy against Government. *'Bande Mataram'* comes from him every morning to me with the two thin chappaties he makes for me, and again at breakfast when he comes to give me some of his dal. *'Ram Ram'* say I sometimes, and sometimes, *Bande Mataram.* 'Can' and 'May' are about only the two English words I can recognise when he speaks. The rest is all something which only his brave heart conceives and understands -- not I. I must make one exception. I discovered by a process of persevering induction that 'pay' in Nidan Singh's vocabulary means 'give'. He pays dal, he pays chappati, the deputy jailor pays vegetables and other rations. You pay a letter or a note, if that is ever permitted in a British jail. Life were pleasant, and India free, if we were all brave and honest men, knowing but little English, like Nidan Singh.

Let me now spin for a while. Little does Gandhiji know that I have come to love this dear wheel in my cell veritably like a younger brother. His heart would beat and his eyes glow with pleasure if he saw it.

16.1.22.

Monday. This morning, immediately the Prison King left this block after his weekly inspection, some kind of recalcitrance on the part of two of the Sikh prisoners led to a sudden noise and rally of warders with hand-cuffs. The two men have been hand-cuffed and taken to the close prison.

Last night was as bad as any other night for my asthma. I believe I must eschew dal even in my mid-day meal. So I told the Superintendent this morning when he was here, and asked him if he could give me a pint of milk and loaf-bread instead of rice and dal. He said he could do it.

Understand that Lalaji has been released by Government. This may be good or bad. Cannot tell from here what effect it would have on the morale of the Punjab people.

The Madras City hartal aftermath has commenced, and I am told about 30 men (but not any well-known persons) have been arrested. It appears true that Thiagaraya Chetty's house was besieged by a mob.

I am told, I don't know whether it is true, that some question has been asked about me in the Madras Legislative Council. Wish that nothing by way of attempts to get me favourable terms is done. It would be a waste of human undertaking if I should flash in the pan by a premature release.

17.1.22.

Tuesday. The noise of the Prison King's boots woke me up at about 11 last night. My sleep must have been very light to have been disturbed by such a little noise. Sastriar was reading and he was told he should sleep and not read so late. I woke up early and did my prayers. Had to wait long for the cell to be opened. I asked the chief warder why it was opened so late. "Holiday to-day." "Why, what for?" "Prince of Wales," said he and smiled.

The Deputy Jailor promised to send me a knife and spoon for slicing my bread for the noon meal and for taking my milk and sago in the evening.

Strolled in the open air for thirty minutes in the morning after ablutions and then span for an hour. N.K. Vijiaraghavan had sent two wheels and I had given the heavier one to Muhammad Ghouse, myself using the lighter one. I am using the heavy one since I returned from the hospital. It is so much nicer than the other wheel. It is a marvel of smoothness. What would prison life have been but for the wheel!

Read the *Kural* and the Bible last night. Skipped through Paul Richard's *Scourage of Christ,* which Ganesh has kindly sent me. It is a repetition of the well-known attacks on current Christianity, opposing the life of modern christians to Christ's life and teachings. The whole book is composed in epigrams. The pitch of the epigrams sometimes suit the matter, sometimes the composition wobbles. The get-up which Ganesh

gives to his publications is far out of proportion to the value of the books.

The Superintendent appears to have instructed my removal to hospital again. I told the Sub-Assistant Surgeon that if I had a choice in the matter I would prefer to remain in the cell. The bugs in the hospital are too much for me. The night pots kept in continual use throughout the night make it practically like sleeping in the verandah of a big latrine. Add to this, the groans or the delirium of some of the patients. It gets on my nerves. Though it is solitary confinement here in the cell, it is better than the other place. Did a little Socrates into Tamil. Ramayanam in the afternoon. Felt very weak. Evening meal at 4 P.M. and locked in at 5 P.M. for the Prince's sake. Span till it grew dark. The wheel is a poem of smoothness and beauty. *Kural* in the night.

Heard a wonderful story of 2,000 persons arrested in Bombay and brought over to Madras. If only such things were true!

The latest canard is that a "Collector" has been murdered at Salem. These stories indicate the prevailing yearning for violence of some sort by somebody or other.

18.1.22.

Wednesday. In spite of strenuous prayers, the vision of the true God has not yet come to me. It is a hard task to keep the wandering mind steady, and even after that, the mind does not find its real objective but dwells on family, self, friends, and country, and formulates desires instead of purifying itself. My only purpose in prayer at this stage should be to struggle for a vision of the Supreme One and if I see Him once, then the rest will take care of itself. I now understand what the ancient Rishis meant when they did *tapas* for God to "appear" before them.

Non-co-operation is not a means to a political end, but a Dharma by itself. To abstain from co-operating with wrong is an absolute duty. This is so, not simply because thereby we shall evict the Englishmen. It is an absolute duty, to release one-self from the net of wrong in which one is entangled. It is not a programme for the time being, or for any particular period in politics. It is a duty for all time to refuse to participate in the degradation of one's people, whether you succeed in enfranchising them within the period fixed by the Congress or not. It is not a desperate remedy resolved upon because other remedies have failed, but an absolute and eternal moral duty even as honesty and charity are duties irrespective of result or occasion. To refuse to co-operate in the process of reducing ourselves to foreign rule and in the maintenance of it is the natural law and

instinct. We forgot this law of national life, and cast our minds into the terrible slough of unfelt slavery. Now that we have re-discovered the rule of life, it is our duty, absolute and for all time, to obey it.

Something, I believe, is going on outside; the Superintendent came up to my cell and enquired about my health. He said he would give butter for my toast. He advised me to take the toast cold, as hot toast causes indigestion.

Two more canards, one that the Police Sub-Inspector of Vaniambady has been done to death, and another, that our Chief Warder's son, a constable in the Madras City Police, has turned non-co-operator and has resigned. The latter causes great glee among the warders who heartily dislike their Chief.

I just understand that Sastriar is a diabetic patient. He looks rather poor in health and not as cheerful as he might be expected to be.

Poor Thevan, who is the serving prisoner in the hospital, is so kind and regular in his attentions, and so honest. The more I see the so-called criminals close at hand here, the more convinced I am that the system of laws, trials, and punishments which we have adopted is wrong from the root upwards.

19.1.22.

Thursday. The Sub-Assistant Surgeon was good enough to enquire about my health from across the wall as I was going to the latrine. Learning that I was free from fresh boils, he spoke even as if he had himself been the inventor of the vaccine with which I was injected. Pasteur himself could not have been more smug. He told me that loaf-bread was a cure for constipation when I suggested that I might take some raw tomatoes. He advised me not to press for anything now. Tomatoes may increase my asthma! The true reason seems to be a dread of his Superintendent.

The Vellore Jail Unpublished Gazette brings the following news : the comments are mine. De Valera is still asking his people to reject the Treaty. The Bharatpur Magistrate flogged some political prisoners in the presence of other prisoners and this has caused great agitation. Such magistrates are truly our friends. Several arrests in Kurnool. Salem is not doing ill. Five persons summoned for civil disobedience in Atur. C. Anantachari is in remand. Vasudevayya is in jail (6 months' R.I.). Tirupattur men, Wahab Saheb and Ramaswami Iyer, six months each, former rigorous, latter simple. Who is Srinivasan who is said to have

resigned from the Police? Honorary Magistrates' stray resignations from Tenkasi, and Tiruvellore, are only symptoms of a fresh awakening, not much by themselves. 3,500 volunteers were in prison in Calcutta up to the middle of January. Hakim Ajmal Khan said in his Presidential Address that Egypt had adopted the Indian method of non-co-operation. Pandit Malaviya's son Govind was given eighteen months rigorous along with his cousin Krishna Kant. Afterwards reduced to six months, simple. Shyam Sunder Chakravarty too is arrested in Calcutta.

Fire opened in Madras and half a dozen killed, because stones were thrown at a police officer's car.

I get confirmation for my suspicions that there was some sort of agitation outside about my food and health in jail. People are so sadly mistaken about what they ought to do. I am here hungering not for food but to learn that strenuous work is going on outside. Our hunger and thirst are, for more and more men to come into the jail. People seem to imagine that only a few of us unfortunates have to be in jail and so we should be helped to serve our terms out as comfortably as possible. So they take kindly interest in our jail life and do their best to make our imprisonments as bearable as possible by agitating about our health, our food, etc. I wish they realised that we are here for a cause which demands their immediate attention independently of our own food and comforts in jail. They would then talk less of repression, as if it were an evil to be met immediately by Round Table Conferences. They would then welcome the battle given by Government.

Poor Sastriar has developed dysentery. If he goes to hospital, he will be put on rice-water which is the only form of light diet within the ambit of the Sub-Asst. Surgeon. For any form of milk, the Prison King's sign manual is necessary.

I just heard at the latrine the bitter wailings of a prisoner. "O this *kolambu*, without salt, without chillies, mere potwash fluid, -- they take Government pay and also our food -- Will God not turn His eyes to these crimes?" But I suppose even under Swaraj such corruption must be expected. Who is dishonest now except our own men? How and when will the hearts of our men be changed and brought to the path of right conduct? Heaven knows!

I was pushing away from my mind, as trespassers, the thoughts that came up each time the familiar whistle of the passing railway train came across the prison bars. But, to-day, as I was at my evening prayer, the sweet music of the village Nagaswaram that came from some happy home

in the hamlets lying outside the prison wall, brought with it such an irresistible rush of happy recollections that I could not for long get them out. The music of these pipes is to me, and I suppose to every man and woman in this land, a sound that brings on its back a world of sweet recollections, a *vahana* of happy youth, of joy and hope. As I let myself wander for a moment in this happy dream-world, I could not resist my tears. Yet God has not spared of his good things for me. Love immeasurable has been my share from wife, family, friends and all. But who can feel satisfied and say, it is enough?

These thoughts render me weak. All my strength is needed for the battle, and I cannot afford to let my mind wander thus into the garden of sweet flowers that yield only tears. All that I shall say to my God is, if she is anywhere and is still subject to pleasure and pain, keep her happy and free from pain or sadness; and give me strength to endure and to perform my duties.

20.1.22.

Friday. It is a rare privilege to live here in such strange company. On one side, there are always some two or three men sentenced by revengeful Courts, or punished under the disciplinary jurisdiction of the Superintendent, and confined in solitary and dark cells. A thick wooden door is drawn over the ordinary barred cell door to keep off light and air. What is left is the hole in the opposite wall and two tiny round holes in the roof leading into the curved tubing supposed to act as ventilators. The warders are less cruel than the regulations, and often leave the wooden door undrawn when they do not expect the Superintendent to come and see. I am placed in one of these rooms. But the wooden door is not drawn. Just now there is a young Mussalman lad of Ambur, sturdy, bright, and handsome, as made by God, and condemned to this kind of imprisonment by man, for some outburst of animal spirits, some assault in company with friends, as he says, or it may be for a more serious deviation from the law, and he is now kept in a solitary cell, locked in day and night, except for a few minutes to take in his food and water thrice a day, and a heavy wooden door is drawn across the iron bars of his cell door and bolted, so that God's light and air may not reach him. Luckily, there is a hole on the other side of the wall, 9 inches in height and a yard long, which is not provided with any wooden or other shutter but is only barred. Next, is a Moplah undergoing, according to jail rules, a month's solitary confinement in the course of his ten years sentence of hard labour for manslaugh-

ter. He is not shut out from light by the wooden door, but only locked in.

On the other side, beyond Sastriar's cell, are four young men awaiting death at the gallows. Kept in closest confinement, under special guard day and night, these sturdy youths who are as cheerful as soldiers in a cantonment, always sitting close against the cell door, for it is the nearest approach to freedom and light, and doing nothing but counting the hours and the tedious days, keep sending their routine petitions to Government. They watch, and sometimes, I believe, jeer at me in natural jealousy, as I move about without a guard, enjoying comparative luxuries such as going to the tap to bathe, or wash my dish, or bring water, and pass in front of them, a Brahmin -- clean, and in white clothes, as if to mock at their condition. From behind my cell come the constant chatter and monotonous jokes with which another set of condemned unfortunates pass their days and nights, awaiting the gallows. I have not seen their faces, for I should not stroll behind this block though the compound is the same; but their voices, their foul abuse, and oft-repeated attempts at humour, and their occasional prayers of desperation and utterances of God's name, are as familiar to me, as the activities of fellow-tenants of the same house should be. The most prosaic thing is the chatter of the warders keeping guard over the condemned men, and at nights it reaches an intolerable pitch. If I complain, the chief warder, I suppose, will punish them or at least prohibit them from making noise, not out of solicitude for my sleep, but because the sentry should not enjoy themselves by chatting. But this would be only to make myself a hated object among these poor semi-starved fellows, who think they are free men, but have practically to live the same life as the prisoners over whom they are supposed to keep guard.

Then, at dead of night, comes the convict night-watchman's heavy tread (for his shoes are ill-fitting and heavy), and himself a prisoner, often for a long term, for murder or other heinous offence. Watch after watch, he stands in front of my cell and throws the light of his lantern into it to see if I have escaped or am safe inside! These convict warders, convict overseers and convict night-watchmen are a curious hierarchy worthy of study. They are given white clothes reaching to the ends of arms and legs, unlike those of ordinary prisoners, a leather-belt and a white head-gear. The convict number instead of hanging by a string round the neck on a shabby tin disk is engraved on a little brass shield pinned to the vest on the right chest and kept shining like a medal or other emblem of honour. The higher ranks of this hierarchy go with a baton, the emblem of discipline and power. The convict-warder gets his rice-food and, I

understand, a rupee a month, which is banked for him without interest against his day of release. That is his pay for his work. They get remission of 4 to 8 days in the month. Almost all the most arduous and responsible work, including supervision over prisoners' work, and watch at nights, is got out of these convict officials; and they are efficient according to the ideals of the Prison Code; for any disobedience, impertinence, delinquency, default or displeasure means summary removal from the convict hierarchy and degradation to the status of convict prisoner, over whom he a little while exercised tyrannic discipline. This fall is so much dreaded that the convict warder is prepared to do anything to avoid it. Hence the efficiency. This is the slave system, made self-supporting, even in the matter of supervision.

Sastriar's dysentery is not better and he is just gone to hospital.

The promised butter came. Truly, the niggardliness of the doles here enhances the value of things. I learnt here how to take the butter off and deal with it so that not a pin's head (for it would be quite a decent fraction of the whole) may not be left unconsumed.

Had a fifth injection of the vaccine for boils. I understand it is the maximum dose to-day.

Spinning. Did a little of Socrates, and Ramayanam : Finding of Sita, and her trials.

In the evening, the jail clerk brought me the expected letter from home. No enclosure from Rangoon from the girls, but Krishnaswami and Narasimham and my brother write. It is just the same as with the sugar and the butter. The privation in respect of letters has served to enhance the appetite for them, and I chewed and consumed every word and line of the letter.

Today, I have done one month in jail. In time-values also, the prison is not the same as outside.

21.1.22.

Saturday. The injection gave a kind of heavy head yesterday but its main effect seems to be felt this evening. Feel very weak and unable to do anything.

22.1.22.

Sunday. The conjee in the evening is a regular battle with the flies. With these flies and the radish leaf and unbroken dal kolambu every day, no wonder there is a lot of dysentery and persistent stomach disease in the

Jail, the former carrying the infection, and the latter keeping the bowels irritated. If once these flies have a taste of your dish, they get really mad over it and will not go whatever you may do. There is much that can be observed in the Vellore Jail and usefully recorded about these insects; the hours of their activity, their migrations, their temper under changing conditions and the nature of their hunger and thirst.

Read some of the most beautiful parts of Sundarakandam yesterday. The affection which Sita has for brave, faithful, self-less Lakshmana, is so beautifully conceived and expressed. It is a delicate mixture of love and reverence and maternal affection, the full beauty of which no one but a Hindu poet can conceive and delineate, and no one but a Hindu Grahasta can fully understand.

Had a clean Brahmin shave. The barber was an old man, quite a character. He hails from Tirupattur. Was convicted by a jury of the Salem Sessions Court on a false charge and given five years. Again, after a long interval, sent by the Chittoor Sessions Court on another false charge for another five years. "O, why have these Ayyamars (Brahmin sub-inspectors of police) become so bad and godless? When will these policemen be abolished altogether?" I said, "The cases against you were all false, but, some real thieves and robbers there are certainly. And the police are necessary to protect people against them."

"Yes, yes, there are thieves no doubt. Thank God and your grace, I have property and lands and cattle. My harvest was once stolen by thieves. Policemen there may be, but they should be honest."

"Why did the Sub-Inspector bring a false charge against you," I asked.

"He asked me for the milch cow I had. I told him I would give myself or my son to him as a slave, but this was a calf born and brought up in my house and I could not give it away for my life; and he kept the grudge and got me in when there was a robbery somewhere."

"What is your term yet to be done?"

"I have eight months more, and three years police surveillance."

"So you have to bribe the policemen for three years to keep out of jail again."

"No, why should I bribe them? I won't. Let the beggars watch me. I am not going to steal sheep or rob. I have lands and house and property, by the grace of God. I have a plan to ask the Collector to give me a book wherein to take the policeman's signature so that they may not cheat me."

He was not a bad barber and was proud of his cunning too. "Why are such good Mahatmas like you to do tapas here in this place meant for

thieves and robbers? Won't God help us? I have now spent ten years of my life in prison, Sir, and I am going away in eight months."

The old man finished my head rather in a hurry, saying he had lots of people to attend to in the kitchen. It was necessary he should attend to the men in the kitchen for, it is there he could beg and get some more food to satisfy his hunger.

This morning my weight was taken. It was 98 lbs. It was 104 on entry. 6 lbs. in one month is not a negligible decrease. The Sub-Assistant Surgeon looked rather puzzled and very unwillingly made the entry on my ticket.

One must admire the bearing of the chief warder, Shaik Madar Sahib. Every jail-warder and prisoner, however they may dislike him, has a wholesome fear of him. In fact, he seems to be the only efficient man in the jail. The other day he saw me sweep my cell and he said, "Why do you do this? Where is Narayanasami (a convict waterman and man of all work in this block)? He will do it for you." I spoke the usual things about dignity of labour and the great convenience of knowing to help oneself. He agreed and said, "Why, I know and do every household work, cooking, sweeping, etc." This, of course, convinced me that even great men ought to do these things. He gets a salary of Rs.45 a month and does not seem to have had much education. But his bearing is that of a high official in an Indian State.

23.1.22.

Monday. The Royal Visit. So, roused from bed at 5 A.M. You keep all your things out in the verandah and stand below for His Majesty to pass along and inspect his subjects and all their belongings. This gives an opportunity for the cell to be cleaned up thoroughly, so far as I am concerned. His Majesty is accompanied by Dr. Little and by the Jailor and the Deputy Jailor. The Deputy Jailor will be Jailor during the former's absence on leave for a month, and the new Deputy Jailor, a short Brahmana, a typical Government servant who has come from some other jail, also formed part of the royal suite. "Are you all right?" "Fairly well, Thank you!" "No more boils?" "No." "What about the other thing?" Dr. Little helped His Majesty by adding, "Asthma." "Yes it is there, but mild." "Are you taking medicine for it or do you manage without it?" "No, I don't take medicine, I depend simply on regulation of diet." "Yes, it is better not to take medicine for it." I enquired if it was his instruction to lock me up

day and night in the solitary cell, just like prisoners under special punishment. He enquired about the hours, and said it was his intention that we should be allowed to be out for 5 hours in the day, 6 to 8 and 10.30 to 12 in the morning and again 4.30 to 6 in the evening. This means about an hour and a half for each meal and for the latrine and the washing of plates and washing and drying of towels and clothes, airing of bed, storing of water, cleaning up of cell, etc. I told him that it was then much the same as the case of the special punishment prisoners. He answered, "No, they are supposed to be in most of the day" -- whatever that might mean.

The practice of keeping the condemned prisoners in solitary cells the whole day, without work or recreation or any moral or spiritual ministration, is an evil system. They remain thus for some months on account of the petitions sent up in the usual course to Government, Local and Central. They soon lose the chastening effect felt on hearing the judicial sentence pronounced, and are left to their own brutal instincts. The warders do not pay any attention to them except to see that they do not escape. I have every reason to think that some of them get into horrible ways. The language I hear from the block behind my cell, where one of the prisoners appears to be a masterful gallant, always keeping up a conversation with his fellow unfortunates in the other cells in the block, leaves me no doubt in the matter.

I do not see why they should not be made to do some work in the open air during the pendency of their appeals and petitions. The work may be light, if there is any compunction about giving hard labour to a condemned man. It cannot be said that it is too difficult or risky to let them have the freedom necessary for work, because the risk is taken with the same men when once their sentence is commuted to transportation for life or imprisonment for twenty years.

Wrote some letters to be sent home. I imagine that the vagabond railway train whistles as it passes the jail wall to mock in a good humoured way at my prison bars. I suppose there is a level-crossing near by.

Four non-co-operators have arrived, one with simple imprisonment but with bar-fetters, transferred from Bellary, and three others, of whom Maharajagada Ramakrishnayya is one. They have been placed in the close prison, called here "Pedda Ganji Office," a big block of single cells. The officials seem to have made up their minds to isolate me from every one.

Abdul Wahab of Tirupattur is here, as I see from a petition in which some one has asked for an interview with him. The petition was brought for investigation to this block by mistake.

24.1.22.

Tuesday. Non-payment of taxes is going on in Guntur District. I hear, in South Canara also. Disobedience is going on in a slow way in Tamil Nadu. The Moderates, I hear, have met in conference and increased their demands. How lazily these Moderates follow the track! The blood and sacrifice that goes before them cuts a deep rut along which they cannot but be dragged.

The Superintendent seems bent on taking me into hospital again. Why, I cannot see. I must make it clear to him that it is only as a punishment I go to that place, to sleep among the bugs and chamber-pots. If he is anxious about my loss of weight, I can take the evening temperature for him better than the convict attender or the compounder, and at least as well as his Sub-Assistant Surgeon.

Strolled up and down in the open till regulation time, 8 A.M., and span till 8.45 A.M.

Finished my monthly letter to everybody. We are allowed one letter a month only. So we make each letter practically a budget of letters addressed to many persons and send it to the office. Finished Sundarakandam. What a beautiful book! I remember my father telling me that people make parayanam of Sundarakandam when they pray for the success of any enterprise. Will our Sita be found in the Asoka Garden?

I have just written to Dr. Rajan that the idea that much money has been entrusted for Swadesi work to District Secretaries and that if they go to prison everything may fall into confusion and be lost, is a dangerous idea. Money is a good thing, but often it becomes a clog in the wheel. We may save the money and lose our enterprise! No, no, the die is cast and we must go on.

We all ought to know that Swaraj will not at once or, I think, even for a long time to come, be better government or greater happiness for the people. Elections and their corruptions, injustice, and the power and tyranny of wealth, and inefficiency of administration, will make a hell of life as soon as freedom is given to us. Men will look regretfully back to the old regime of comparative justice, and efficient, peaceful, more or less honest administration. The only thing gained will be that as a race we will be saved from dishonour and subordination. Hope lies only in universal education by which right conduct, fear of god, and love, will be developed among the citizens from childhood. It is only if we succeed in this that Swaraj will mean happiness. Otherwise it will mean the grinding injus-

tices and tyranny of wealth. What a beautiful world it would be, if everybody were just and God-fearing and realised the hapiness of loving other! Yet, there is more practical hope for the ultimate consummation of this ideal in India than elsewhere.

To-day's joke is an invitation card from the Central College Day Committee for the 28th January. It was very kind and nice on somebody's part to have sent me the card duly addressed to the Vellore Jail in the first instance, i.e., knowing that I was a convicted prisoner.

25.1.22.

Wednesday. Nidhan Singh, the Sikh prisoner who has undertaken the baking of chappaties for all the Sikhs, and Shaik Mahomed, Congress worker from Cuddapah, who does the chappaties for Mussalmans, have been sent to this block, on account of measles and small-pox in their block. Nidhan Singh coughs badly but won't take hospital medicine. They are roused at four in the morning and let out to go to the kitchen. I have not seen more cheerful cooks in all my long troubles with cooks of all sorts. Brahmins seem to be born cooks, but unlike other born artists they seem born to be wicked at their work.

Have not seen a more worthless or a more idiotic chatterbox than the warder now in charge of this block, during Perumal's temporary engagement in the kitchen. Perumal, of course, likes to be warder in the kitchen which is the Garden of Eden in the jail.

Spinning and translation of Socrates' Defence. The Collector of Income-Tax is still pursuing me. He has sent a form in which to fill up my sources of income!

It is a fine art in cruelty to make the gangs of prisoners work in the jail gardens and produce all kinds of nice vegetables, but give them tamarind soup in which float only fibrous bits of stalk and leaves of radish all the year round. What happens to the other things that are grown, whether they are lost in the systematic robbery of officials or sold for money to contractors and high officials, I cannot tell. There is a practice here of putting whole grain dhall instead of the usual husked and cleaned dhall for the soup or *kolambu*. It appears it is claimed to be good for the prisoners' health, but the men themselves complain that it is worse than horses' food. I fear the practice has arisen out of a desire for economy and not so much out of original ideas of dietetic hygiene.

The Superintendent's calculation that we have five hours outside the

cells daily is quite wrong. Most of the time during the three breaks is taken up by the eating and washing of dishes. Keeping the cell door unlocked is by itself not more than satisfaction to the soul; it cannot bring in more fresh air into the lungs or give play to the muslces, unless one is given time to move about. To-day I found that my toast and milk and the battle with the flies take just a few minutes less than an hour and then there are the plates to wash and the cell to be immediately cleaned; otherwise more vermin to keep you company.

26.1.22.

Thursday. My stomach has gone from one extreme to the other now. Instead of constipation, I have loose motions and have to get up during nights. To appeal to the doctor means probably change of diet and probably going into hospital. So let me give a trial to nature yet.

Spinning more than before.

The Superintendent with his two Sub-Assistant Surgeons called at my cell to-day and enquired about my health. He was concerned about my loose motions, and told the Sub-Assistant to give me a small dose of bismuth. He also ordered raw tomatoes to be given me. He told me to make tomato-sandwiches with bread and butter, with a gusto which suggested that it is a great delicacy with them. During the talk with the Superintendent, the Sub-Assistant gave a beautiful story which I wish had been true, that I generally suffer from constipation, but that once in two or three days there is wash out with loose motions. This had, of course, to be contradicted by me. The young man is so eager to please his boss. The Superintendent has become very nice and has changed from his original royal reticence to active benevolence, keeping, of course, enough of the bureaucratic feeling to save the system from degenerating into common humanity.

The amusing part of the interview was the persistent manner in which the little doctor went on interpreting in an explanatory way in Tamil what the big doctor was telling me in English, quite forgetting, I suppose, that I could understand English.

I cannot get the flies out of the neighbourhood of my person, or my mind. Flies and ants are two friends dating back to the memory of earliest childhood. Indeed, I can't see one of these poor little things without thinking of my mother as she was when I was a child. I remember the pleased wonderment with which I observed the ways and manners of

these little friends of my childhood for a period, after which my memory is blank for many a year. The ants soon became objects of slight hatred and anger when they began to bite sometimes, and sometimes captured my sweets and would not abandon their prize even on detection. Not so the fly. It was a little friend which claimed my childhood's unalloyed affection, till, much later, the scientists came and prejudiced my mind so dreadfully against it. What a beautiful doctrine (calculated to bring about universal charity) of transmigration, which my mother taught me as absolute truth, till about the time when she died. With her this truth that she gave me also died; and doubt, atheism, and anarchy, took its place. If young men could be made to believe in this doctrine, making of it a live truth, not a theory for mere disputation, how much less hatred and cruelty there could be than there is now.

Somehow my poor mother haunts my mind and sweetens my thoughts to-day. She could not imagine that her fond child, her pride and hope, would be in a common gaol, imprisoned and locked up under a 9 ft. arch. I can fancy to myself all the pleasures of explaining to her the necessity and the beauty of this retirement and this struggle. Yet another soul there was who has now passed away from this earth, from whose mind too the idea was farthest, that I should ever be in prisons, a fate from which, to her delight and pride, I had saved so many of my clients.

These idle thoughts I occupied myself with, while getting over the hard breathing that worried me these days in the afternoons too, after my bath. Though the nights are free, I see that my constitution has become weak and has not been able to throw off the asthma -- the least exertion brings it on in daytime.

N.K. Vijiaraghavan has become the diligent consul on behalf of all of us jail birds. He has just sent a nice tin box with all shaving tackle. I see he is sending a bottle of cocoanut oil for the Zamindar.

The Jailor who has gone on leave has mislaid the telegram I sent, and the note for cloves and other things which I wanted bought for me.

How beautiful are the verses sung by Pattanattu Pillaiar over his mother's body! The sudden outburst of affection in the midst of the stern ascetism of this great man is remarkably beautiful; and the simplicity of his wail goes to the bottom of human nature. The beauty of Pattanattu Pillaiar's poetry is the simplicity of his style and vocabulary. He has woven his verses in the language of the man in the street. How one wishes his poetry embraced other topics besides the one theme of his life and song, the vanity of the things of the earth and the yearning to be one with

the Supreme Being.

28.1.22.

Saturday. At a little after eight o'clock last night, there was a sudden disturbance in the verandah, in the direction of the cells occupied by the condemned prisoners, and I heard the noise of blows and kicks. I was in the cell, locked up, and could see nothing, only hear blows and moans. My shouting for the warders was of no avail, for they were not willing to stop their game and explain to me. After brutally thrashing their man, they put him into a cell and locked him up. It was clear they had discovered a man who had escaped lock-up somewhere, and caught him and punished him thus. We were of course unable to help or do anything as we were inside our cells.

In the morning the warder in charge talked to Md. Ghouse pleasantly and explained how the rogue had escaped the file and lock-up in his block in the evening, how they were searching for the missing man everywhere, and found him at last hiding in the drain in his block, near the latrine. When asked why there was such brutal thrashing, he absolutely denied it and gave a cock and bull story of how the noise of a number of warders with shoes on pushing the man into the cell could produce the noise mistaken by us for beating. He repeated this legend to me, but when I treated it with contempt and admonished him, he pleaded that he himself had gone away to bring the keys and that they might have beaten the man then. The question is whether I should mention their misconduct to the Superintendent. I decided not to do so. If the Superintendent himself inflicted such brutal punishment (only it has to be legalised), what would I do? Nothing. Why should I appeal to him now? If I am able to make these warders realise that what they did was wrong, it would be something. I don't think I should depend on the Superintendent's goodness, and appeal to him. As a matter of fact, the prisoner was, subsequently legally awarded three months bar-fetters -- a brutality not inferior to the thrashing given by the angry warders.

Venkatasubbayya called at my cell and told me that he has been put in the stores to assist the Deputy Jailor. That is a great promotion.

Sastriar has come back from hospital. He is very weak. His diabetes is pulling him down. Maharajagada Ramakrishnayya is, I understand, doing well in the close prison block.

The cotton from the jail plants is so beautiful to spin. Narayanaswami

(convicted for receiving stolen property, who is working as waterman in this block) brought me a nice sliver made of it and I finished it with avidity at once.

I understand the Superintendent objects to the sending of more than one letter enclosed in a cover as a single letter. I don't think he is right in his interpretation of one letter to mean that only one person should be written to. But what does it matter? He makes the rule and may interpret it as he likes. He has not, however, interfered with the letter I sent last, in which I had enclosed letters to Dr. Rajan and Mahatmaji, and to Papa and Lakshmi at Rangoon.

But for my stomach being in bad condition, I don't think a prince could enjoy a better breakfast than the one I am given, an 8 oz. loaf of bread sliced by myself and nicely toasted, 1 oz. of good fresh butter, a few fresh tomatoes and a pint of milk, and with a cup of water heated over my candle. The meal is a right royal one which should keep my body quite contented and make me fat in a short time. The raw tomatoes are enough to make me long to come back to the Vellore jail even after I am released.*

29.1.22.

Sunday. Notice for the Executive Committee meeting of the Tamil Provincial Congress Committee has been sent to me and Sastriar. They meet at Pantulu Iyer's house at Kumbakonam on 31st instant. The subjects show a humdrum routine and no cavalry progress. But I suppose nothing better can be done with a people whose daily concerns and anxieties are all absorbing, and to whom the country merely connotes space for family activities.

Was weighed again this morning. 98 lbs. without my upper cloth, and 99 lbs. with it, i.e., no change from the last weighment. Bread and butter and tomatoes seems now to be given to many of our friends. The one thing we want is curd or good buttermilk to which we have got used all through life. Our stomachs rebel now against the privation and get irritated with other diet.

My breakfast (bread, butter, tomatoes and milk) takes full one hour, the eating alone, 12 to 1 p.m. It is easy to gulp down rice and curry but to get through tough dry toast (which I am asked to take cold) is a slow and

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* Note : After a few days, the toasting got unsatisfactory. So I began to take the bread raw. The butter got to be adulterated, and stolen from also.

tedious business. However, if one does not mind the time, there can be no complaint that it is not a full breakfast.

Finished 'Illarayiyal' in *Kural*.

Did Socrates to-day. My loose motions have not stopped. The Sub-Assistant Surgeon forgot to send the powders for my stomach both yesterday and today.

30.1.22.

Worse last night. The Sub-Assistant Surgeon came at about ten in the night and brought the powder. He does not know that arrowroot conjee is a good astringent diet for loose bowels. One of my neighbours was executed early this morning, -- a sturdy young fellow.

I happened to be in the Jailor's office this morning to sign a receipt for some purchases made for me out of my money. I found him in a state of fury, storming and fuming against two non-co-operators who complained about the conduct of a convict warder who had pushed down and injured an old man, a fellow prisoner (not a non-co-operator). "Who are you to interfere in these matters?" "Put him in the distant cell and teach him a sound lesson." "They were quiet for some days, they are up again" and so on, he was ejaculating from his chair. The two non-co-operators thus addressed were in the verandah. Then the Jailor went out and, before my eyes and in the presence of numerous people, without provocation and in a barbarous manner, began hitting one of them (Subba Rao, one of the most guile-less and ardent of Satyagrahis that I have ever met) in the face and cheeks and, losing his temper more and more, let himself go thoroughly. He then returned to his room and sat down in his chair, near which I was seated. Everybody present was upset by this public and indecent conduct.

The Jailor thereafter calmed down and seemed to realise the foolishness of his conduct. There was not much repentence; but there was fear that his offence had been witnessed by one too many. He appealed to me about the unnecessary interference of the man in other people's affairs, said that they had to maintain discipline in jail, that rough handling of prisoners was necessary, and so on. I told him I did not mind all that, but his conduct in assaulting the young man was wrong and he should apologise. "You have witnessed it and I do not wish the matter to go up," he mumbled. I called in Subba Rao, who came, and bursting into tears, said, "I sincerely tell you, I do not mind your beating me or kicking me.

Pray God bless you. I could not bear to see a fellow prisoner treated brutally by the convict warder. I am so happy that I am receiving blows on that account. I am only sorry you did not beat me more." A warder, a young fellow put on office duty to help the remission clerk, began sobbing for sheer sympathy. Then the Jailor said, "I am sorry for what I did." Those who know the brutality that is attained by a not over-scrupulous officer in a jail holding 2,000 convicts of all kinds, can realise the moral achievement of such a statement coming from his mouth in the presence of many officials and others. Subba Rao continued haranguing in the same strain as before and no one dared interrupt him. Then a warder told him, "Now that he has begged pardon let it end, please go." The matter, I thought, ended there, and I came away.

I took my breakfast and was cleaning my cell floor of the bread crumbs, when the Jailor put in his appearance and requested me to go to the close prison as all of them had refused to take their food. This was the first time such an appeal for non-official interference was made. I asked if it was necessary I should go. He said yes. I went accordingly and found a determind body of people who said they had resolved to appeal to God and to abstain from their noon meal. A Sikh prisoner had joined them, who said vengeance was the law. I told him he belonged to a different school of thought from us and that I would talk to him separately on the subject of vengeance. After a prolonged discussion, I was able to convince most of the men that they ought not to exhibit any expressions of dissatisfaction with their lot, either by words or deed, such as hunger striking. The rest said they were not convinced but agreed to follow my advice, because I gave it. The Sikh prisoner was the first to say that they should accept my word. A Mussalman who was at first terribly opposed to all ideas of surrender, afterwards fully agreed with me and helped me a great deal. So also, Abdul Badsha of Vellore helped much. They all finally sat down for breakfast at half past two to the delight of everybody and I thanked them and came back. The Jailor was outside and was greatly relieved.

There is no doubt the Jailor was in terrible fear of the consequence of his thoughtless action in *publicly* beating Subba Rao, and did not want the assault to reach the ears of the Superintendent. His appeal for my interference was therefore from interested motives. But the prestige of the Jail Official was thoroughly shaken by the incident, and my settlement of the strike in the close prison was evidently taken by the whole Jail as a triumph for "Swadesi." "Swadesi," both adjective and noun, is a term applied by the ordinary prisoner to all non-co-operation prisoners.

We do great injury to the movement and impede its progress by doing anything which will make the world imagine that prison-life is hard. We have gone in for a great cause on which we should concentrate our thoughts and efforts and not fritter them away in the reform of Jail administration and the purification of subordinate officials. By our struggling over these matters we divert the attention of the general public also into the minor channels during a critical period in the movement. Again, we give satisfaction to those who treat us cruelly by exhibiting symptoms of pain. How many hundreds of common prisoners patiently bear the same treatment as is accorded to us, if not worse? May we, who claim to be better than these prisoners, show comparative weakness? Rather should we prove we have greater strength to bear. I was glad I had an opportunity to go to the close prison where I saw quite a crowd of fine young non-co-operators, including one from Bellary undergoing simple imprisonment but having bar-fetters. Latterly he got freed from the fetters along with the others and became the most persevering and best spinner in the Jail. He had been a jail warder himself before he became a non-co-operator. I understand that all the prisoners undergoing rigorous imprisonment in the close prison are made to carry their night pots (chatties without lids) from their cells every morning to the opposite corner of the jail grounds, a distance of about a furlong. They have to do this mostly in a hurry and it is a feat to carry the pots all the way without spilling the contents over themselves. Further, they have no facilities for bathing. The carrying of night soil is generally felt to be work of a degrading nature and to make high-caste political prisoners do it is a form of cruelty, which, if deliberately intended, has a finesse worthy of admiration. It is impossible to see what grounds there can be for putting so many of the political prisoners in the close prison and subjecting them to this, as if it is a discipline specially ordered for that place. The close prison is intended for the dangerous or recalcitrant convicts of the worst type. Apparently, the jail officials place the political prisoners, some of them even simple term men, in that category, not because they are a danger to Government, but because they try to expose the corruptions and cruelties of jail administration.

31.1.22.

Tuesday. Barrister Lakshminarayana and Narasimhachariar were observed carrying urine pots along the road in front of our cells. They are not in the close prison but are in block I, and are under-going simple

terms. They appear to have taken to carrying their pots as a protest against the insult and inconvenience deliberately imposed on the friends in the close prison.

The Superintendent appears to have spoken very harshly to Mr. Choudhuri, whose health was very bad, when he complained that no adequate attention was being paid to it. He said, "The remedy is in your own hands. You can give security and go. We don't mind if you lose weight or die in jail." This was the substance of what, as reported to me, had been said by the Superintendent. This might not be civilization or humanity; but it is the natural attitude of enemies at their wits' end, and we should not be worried over it. The fact is that the distinction between political prisoners and moral degenerates is a distinction not understood by the Indian bureaucracy and much less by the Indian jail officials. The Jail Code knows no such distinctions. Special instructions are elastic and vary with the temper of the officials issuing them and the agents actually carrying them out. There is some vague sense of distinction in the case of simple term men, but the finest among us all are perhaps those undergoing rigorous imprisonment. Whether it is a simple or rigorous term, in many cases, depends only on the whim and fancy of the particular magistrate. Those undergoing rigorous imprisonment are not ordinarily looked upon as political prisoners at all by the jail officials. The political character of the prisoner is recognised only as an additional sin and not as marking out the absence of moral depravity.

How false are all the arguments about labourers doing heavy work needing a drink of liquor in the evening! The mendacity of the apologies and pleas of government officials and the department in this matter is proved by the rigid and successful enforcement of government rules totally prohibiting liquor in jails where such heavy work is extracted from prisoners without detriment to health or slackening of efficiency. I remember I once heard a missionary talking of the need for the poor scavenger to get over the smell and offence of his profession by taking a drink. All this is bosh. I see here scavengers, doing their work beautifully, and in perfect condition of body and nerves, without any liquor to console them. The whole case of those who plead for moderate drink as opposed to prohibition can be exploded by showing them the condition obtaining in Government jails. Jail discipline is a triumphant proof on behalf of prohibition as well as of vegetarianism.

Subba Rao came to my cell this morning to tell me that the Jailor was really repentent and requested me to see that the assault on him did not

reach the press. It is a wonderful sight to see him thus sincerely labouring to save the man who assaulted and insulted him in public. He says, and I quite believe it, that Providence brought about the incident so that it may change the Jailor's heart. How beautiful is the path of charity and love, when once we gather wisdom and strength to walk on it, rejecting the temptations of the path of anger and of what passes for manliness and sternness!

1.2.22.

Wednesday. Three others of our friends from Block I took their turn at the night pots to-day. I saw them bravely marching along the road in front of my block with the big chatties on their shoulders. Their pots are big, being the general-ward pots and not the small ones kept in single cells.

I understand this voluntary act on the part of the simple-term non-co-operators of 1st block was taken to the notice of the Prison King, and he said, "Let them take it, don't prevent them." So, he proposes to allow them to go on thus and does not mean to alter the conditions prevailing in the close prison where the rigorous term men are confined.

I thought long, as to why this Satyagraha on the part of Mr.Lakshminarayana and others created anger and self-will in the opposite party, and not that effect which Satyagraha must immediately produce. After some time I was more than ever convinced by this apparent failure that the law of love and suffering cannot be wrong. We often make errors in our experiments. We might as well think that a balloon going up in the air disproves the law of gravity. There must be some admixture of anger or other impurity in this otherwise brave act of Mr.Lakshminarayana and his friends, which produced anger and brutality on the part of the man from whom it was intended to evoke compunction. The purest determination and freedom from all stain of anger on our part is necessary to produce the beautiful effects of suffering and love. The human soul is a delicate mechanism and its workings are as perfect and accurate as those of any electrical machine. However, if our friends persist in what they have begun in a fit of angry determination, shedding the dirt of anger as they go on and doing it for the sake of pure sympathy for those on whom injustice and cruelty is imposed, I am certain even the prison officials' brutality will be conquered. If it is done for the mere purpose of producing a sensation by demonstration or protest and bringing to the notice of the

public or the higher officials of the Government the cruelty imposed by the Vellore Jail Superintendent, then it is not Satyagraha or non-resistance, but only another form of the old method of agitation. It may succeed in putting the evil down or it may not -- which depends on the comparative strength of the forces on either side, and not on the comparative strength of good and evil. These observations of mine, I hope, do not mislead any one to think that I do not appreciate the bravery of the self-imposed suffering undertaken by Lakshminarayana and other friends. On the other hand, I wish so much that all our people had been as sensitive to injustice and wrong and as courageous in suffering as these friends. If this had been our fortune, our strength would have ended in victory long ago.

The un-official Jail Gazette brings news of a meeting dispersed by shooting somewhere in Guntur District. Six persons killed and thirty injured.

How sweet is the whistle of the train every night after lock up! Perhaps it is so, because it is the only voice from the outside world that directly reaches my cell.

This morning the music of pipes woke me up with a sweet Udayaragam. There is a wedding in the Jailor's house. One won't believe it, but my time in the jail is quite full and I am as busy and pressed for time, as I was outside. The fact is that my health is so poor that I am easily fatigued and need a great deal more sleep and rest than others, and consequently can turn out but little work. Here are samples of my occupation on two days:

Rose at 5.30 A.M. Prayer. Made up my bed. Cleaned my teeth, strolled in the open, morning food, cleaned spittoon, cell floor, brought water and sat down to spin at 7.20 A.M. Spinning till 8.40 A.M. Read Pattanattu Pillaiar for an hour, and did Socrates for forty minutes. Washed my hands and feet, and had my meal. At 11.30 sat down spinning till 12.45, closet and rest till 1 P.M. *Robinson Crusoe* till 2.30. Spinning till 3.45. Bath, put up clothes to dry. Shave and evening meal at 5.10 P.M. Washed dishes, closet, got in the clothes and water, and made my bed : 6.30 P.M. Prayers till 7.P.m. Read *Kural* and Bible and retired at 8.15 P.M.

Another day : Prayer, cleaned teeth. Morning food, stroll, cleaned spittoon and brought water. 7.10 A.M. Spinning till 8.30. Wrote a petition for a condemned prisoner till 10 A.M. Pattanattu Pillaiar till 11 A.M. Breakfast, washed dishes etc., and rest till 12.45 P.M. Socrates till 2.10 P.M. Diary and spinning till 3.45 P.M. and went for bath. Took up *Robinson Crusoe* at 4.20, at 4.45 P.M. evening meal and washed dishes, cleaned up floor and sat out in the open till 6 P.M. Prayer, *Kural*, Bible

and Pattanattu Pillaiar. Retired 8.45 P.M.

I cannot read or spin more than I have indicated above. In fact what I do is up to the point of fatigue. It will be seen that my reading has been all devotional. *Robinson Crusoe* occupied much of my time when I came into jail. Then I put it by for a long while. It was only yesterday I took it up again. It is no less devotional than the other books which make up my reading.

2.2.22.

Thursday. I am told by the Jailor that the Superintendent is obstinate about the urine pots of the close prison. Meanwhile, Mahomed Hussain and three others carried the pots of the 1st Block this morning. So they are keeping it up well.

Like the Central College Day Committee, the Directors of the Indian Bank had the courtesy (not unmixed with humour, perhaps) of inviting me to a function of theirs on 4th February, addressing the card care of the Jail Superintendent. Sir P. Tyagaraya Chettiar is unveiling a portrait of a founder of the Bank (M. Adinarayanayya) and opening an 'Economics Library.

Took up *Robinson Crusoe* again after a long while. What a beautiful book! It seems a number of politicals, about ten, have come in to-day.

3.2.22.

Friday. Drafted a petition for a condemned prisoner, who was defended unsuccessfully by my junior when at the bar, Mr. K. Narasimha Iyengar. The jail office should draft and send this petition, but I thought I could amuse myself with the work.

As I am engaged in spinning, the thought strikes me that perhaps many friends, if they saw me, would wonder how I could thus waste my time over work which girls and illiterate persons may well do, but which surely is not meant for men with brains and a high degree of education. There are so many books I have not read. If I kept reading them, no one would accuse me of mis-spending my time. However, when one seriously considers the matter, one must come to this conclusion, that at a time of life when you know for certain that additional learning will only make you die more learned, and not enable you to *do* anything further useful to mankind, or to correct your character in any manner, it is mere self-indulgence and

folly to be reading books, if you can spend the time otherwise in producing or doing something useful to man. Under the circumstances, helping to produce a yard of cloth or a handful of f od is a much more meritorious and proper, though illiterate, act, than merely to acquire knowledge which you know will be sterile and pass away with you in smoke and dust when you lay your account down. Those who read or converse or think in order to *produce* something new, and leave it to mankind for what it is worth, have good reason so to spend their time. But why should I, who cannot compose any song, poem, or book, or otherwise add to the world's stock of knowledge, or mental or moral wealth, keep reading and reading for ever simply because it is the habit of the educated class, when I can spin some yarn and add to the cloth produced in our country. Mental exercises ought to be intended for the development of one's soul, which we believe to be immortal, and to perfect which we should always exert ourselves, or for adding to the world's stock of knowledge; otherwise they are mere self-indulgence like overeating or drinking.

The music and din of the wedding in the Jailor's house is sweetening the air as I sit on my bed praying in my cell, after lock-up. I fancy I see the busy crowd of men, women, and children hurrying up and down and helping to make the noise and happiness of the wedding. What a sweet world full of love and happiness! If we but took care to live in God's ways, how happy we could all be. Can't we teach every man and woman and child to pray for more love and yet more love being sent down to sweeten life in this world for all?

4.2.22.

Saturday. News that the close prison non-co-operators have stopped taking their urine pots, and have been summoned to the Tower. (This is the name for the Prison King's palace, a three storied building in the centre of the Jail grounds). Men are acting without leader or policy. This is a pity. On one side, the 1st Block friends who are not asked to carry the pots are carrying them for Satyagraha; on the other hand, the close prison people, for whose sake this Satygraha was taken up, are acting in a contrary manner.

My cough is persisting and gives me sleepless nights. I fear I must give up the tomatoes and allow my stomach to take care of itself, and save my lungs and my sleep.

Poor Nidhan Singh, the indefatigable, decorous, brave, and patriotic

Sikh prisoner, who makes chappatis for all his people, has been coughing badly and has finally gone to hospital.

A few minutes after I wrote this, the Jailor (who, by the way, is in uniform and busy in the jail in spite of the wedding in his house) came to me in the cell and complained about the close prison people having struck in respect of the urine pots. He told me all kinds of things, which, being mixed up with a great many variations from truth, were unintelligible to me. He said that some of the ringleaders were going to be flogged, and some put down for heavy work, such as ragi-grinding and working the water-pump and the oil-press. "Very well," I said. He had thought, apparently, that the announcement would frighten me. He then told me he had spoken to the Superintendent about my visit to the close prison on Monday last, about his having assaulted Subba Rao and my being present at the time, etc. Of course he must have given a very garbled account. It is no wonder if a man loses all regard for truthfulness in the course of a long official life in which he is often put on his defence, and in which he finds a disregard for truth a very handy weapon to protect himself with. He suggested that I should speak to the men and dissuade them from their recalcitrant conduct. I myself was much desiring to speak to them on the subject and so took advantage of his proposal. I did not wish to see them at the Jailor's office as I would be looked upon as mediator on his behalf. If he would send them to my cell, I said I would gladly talk to them. He agreed to arrange for this, but I doubt very much if he would have the courage to propose it to his Superintendent.

I am very sorry for the line which the men have taken. How can we rightly object to doing any work that might be imposed on us as prisoners if we cannot say that it is an immoral or irreligious act that is demanded of us? We should avoid going to prison if we minded such things. If working with dirt and filth is imposed on us by government, can we complain? Even if they put us down for general scavenging work, we should do it. It is one thing for the Government to realise its duties towards prisoners convicted for political offences, as distinguished from crimes involving moral turpitude, and quite another thing for us to claim lenient treatment, or to go on strike and offer disobedience in respect of such claims. It is the duty of civilised Governments to show leniency, but it is on our part a weakness and a lapse from our ideals to think of claiming such leniency, much more to show fight in order that such favours may be shown. It is like the duty imposed on all to give in charity, but there is no corresponding duty to beg; on the contrary begging is even considered

a vice. All the ordinary rigorous term prisoners in the close prison carry their pots; why should we not do likewise when we are suffering the same kind of punishment? It may be that the punishment is wrongly imposed on us, but that is not our concern when we are out voluntarily to seek unjust punishment and take it without defence or plea of mitigation. Government may not only imprison us, but unjustly put us in dungeons and irons, and impose every laborious or dirty task on us, yet we must accept the punishment. We would be shown in a poor light indeed if we were understood by the world to object to and to struggle against cleaning or carrying our own urine pots because it is degrading work fit only for certain classes of men and not for us. Satyagraha has been famous for its votaries scavenging for themselves, and we would not deserve to go under our leader's flag if we fought to be relieved of such work.

5.2.22.

Sunday. The Jailor came this morning and told me the state of affairs regarding the non-co-operation prisoners. Some of them were put on heavy work far beyond their capacity and five, having thereupon refused to do the work, have been given bar-fetters. Pots were not given at night to those men who refused to carry them in the morning. Many of them had consequently dirtied their cells. He asked me whether I would go and speak to them. I went and had a long talk with them. I told them mostly the substance of the thoughts I have noted above, and that we should accept every barbarity and cruelty imposed on us. Most of them agreed, but some, especially those whose temper had been completely upset by the harshness and ill-treatment imposed on them, stoutly refused to "co-operate" even to the extent of submitting to jail rules and orders, and said they would rather bring down the worst punishment on themselves than submit to the cruelties and indignities. They would carry the principles of non-co-operation even inside the jail gates. On our way back from the close prison, the jailor and I hailed Mr. Lakshminarayana in Block I across the railings, and soon the others in that place came up also. Mr. Lakshminarayana was positive and determined that they should lead an active campaign of passive resistance in respect of the barbarous treatment meted out to the non-co-operation prisoners. He even upbraided me for what he considered was indifference and passivity on my part in regard to the matter. I could not convince him or change his attitude. Some were with me, perhaps only one, Mr. Srinivasan; the rest were inclined to

support Mr. Lakshminarayana, including even Mahomed Hussain who, I had hoped, would be with me entirely. I cannot but admire their largeness of heart and their readiness to undergo the hardships of a severe struggle inside jail against injustice and cruelty, and I was arguing against the inclinations of my own emotions. But I feel strongly that their conduct is leading themselves and others into hopeless confusion of mind and conduct. The main principles of conduct in jail imposed by our movement should not be disturbed by ideas, however praiseworthy in themselves. Returned to my cell and had my morning food late on account of all this, and was in a sad frame of mind. God has not heard my prayers and has thought fit thus to punish us with confusion of mind.

Weighment today showed an increase of one pound. But what was more pleasing was that Md. Hussain, Shafiuk, and Srinivasa Iyer and Narsimhachari were there and told me they had thought over the matter again and desired a fresh talk with me. Sometime afterwards, I understand the Superintendent sent for Mr. Narasimmachariar, and the Jailor related everything that happened to the Superintendent, who thereupon talked over the matter with Narasimhachar. The Superintendent appeared to have been in a very good mood, asked Narasimhachari whether they could not come to a definite understanding, saying that he was unwilling to be needlessly cruel or severe. Narasimhachariar told the Superintendent that he would like to consult me and some people from the close prison and give an answer. The Superintendent appears to have told the Jailor that he would speak to me about this to-morrow. Meanwhile, I asked the Jailor to allow me to meet the 1st Block friends again. This was done. We had a very pleasant meeting in my cell, all to ourselves without any jail official intervening. All of us, except Mr. Lakshminarayana, agreed as to the course we should adopt; that we should advise the close prison friends to remove their pots if asked. We should, on the other hand, also recommend to the Superintendent humane treatment of the non-co-operation prisoners.

7.2.22.

Tuesday. Yesterday was a busy day. The Superintendent asked me to meet all the non-co-operators and make proposals so that there might be a better understanding on both sides. He said some things had been done by him which were undoubtedly wrong; and so also on the side of the non-co-operators, some wrong things had been done; that neither

side's mistakes were an excuse for the other, and that he was willing, if we would help, to begin a fresh page. He appeared quite sincere. He said he had received that day an order from the Government instructing him to treat the political prisoners in a manner different from ordinary prisoners, and that now that he had powers to differntiate he was not going to be cruel or needlessly harsh. We accordingly had a conference in front of my cell in the afternoon. At first there was great difficulty in proceeding. An angry state of mind produced by bad treatment, ill-digested ideas regarding the principles of the movement, and mutual mistrust or want of trust, all contributed to this difficulty. Mr. Lakshminarayana did not lighten the task when he began with a statement that he fully supported the efforts of our friends in the close prison to offer civil disobedience to jail regulations. After some time, however, we came to unanimous conclusions. The carrying of urine pots was stoutly objected to on grounds of religious scruples by only one, which number finally increased to six. So we resolved to tell the Superintendent that this should not be insisted on. We also resolved to ask the Superintendent to cancel the heavy tasks imposed as punishment for not carrying the pots, and the fetters imposed as punishment for not coping with the heavy work thus given. We also had a number of other things to mention, such as cloth below knees for Mussalmans during prayer time, same number of interviews and letters to rigorous as to simple term prisoners, daily bath facilities for rigorous prisoners, separate cooking facilities for Andhra prisoners one of whom was willing to cook, etc. I then explained to them the changed attitude of the Superintendent and the need for a better feeling on our part as well. This was better received than I had expected from the spirit which they had shown at the outset. I told them that our conduct should be such that Government should not have the least trouble in keeping non-co-operators in jail. It should have no anxieties about us except to provide us with food and space. Abdul Wahab of Tirupathur and Ramakrishnayya of Maharajagada, I was sorry to see, had lost their bearings on account of the trials to which the men had been exposed. They are such fine non-co-operators. So it was a pity that they should be upset, and talk and act in a manner inconsistent with the original plans and limitations of our movement. However, everything ended well, as stated above. I saw the Superintendent and handed him a Memorandum of our Conference proceedings. He readily agreed to every proposal and carried out at once the cancellation of punishments and heavy tasks, and what is more, removed all the non-co-operators out of the close prison and placed them

all together, rigorous and simple, in the 1st Block, a consummation which Mr. Lakshminarayana and other friends in that block must have felt to be the very maximum of their desire in the matter.

I had every reason to be thankful to God for the way in which this little tempest was calmed, and I offered humble and thankful prayers.

These events which ended so happily have, however, made it clear to me that many of our friends have not yet realised their weakness. An honest and deep examination of the conduct of our friends would show that they were unable at a certain point to bear the troubles imposed on them by Government and were trying to find relief in the excitement of a conflict and fresh punishment. It is no use deceiving ourselves by such phrases as self-respect, indignities, etc. It is difficult for me to understand a state of mind which makes one refuse to carry one's own chamber pot as anything but a breakdown of one's non-co-operating strength. It is even more difficult not to see the weakness that lurks in the attempt to court other punishments rather than work at hard tasks imposed on us. It is impossible to consider it as proper Satyagraha to complain about the bar-fetters put on us. It makes no difference if the sufferer does not complain and even utters brave words about it himself, but others who are not given the fetters fret to see their fellow prisoners in bar-fetters, and offer to do this and that in order to bring about punishment on themselves also. The method is no doubt non-violent and in line with Satyagraha, but the object, in substance, is the removal of our friends' bar-fetters, which is inconsistent with our original plan and determination to accept suffering without complaint. It is vain to deceive ourselves with the idea that the punishments being grossly unjust, we have a right to put an end to them by courting suffering. It is to suffer unjust punishments without protest or complaint that we have come here, and we would be destroying our own foundations if we attempt, when inside jail, to agitate, protest, or offer Satyagraha against the hardships imposed on us there. The theory of Passive Resistance and non-violent non-co-operation involves submission, and excludes resistance, when once we come to the stage of suffering the penalties of our resistance.

I was sorry also to see Satan working insidiously through the formula of religious objections. Subba Rao who had previously been in full accord with me that there was nothing wrong in carrying the pots and that it was, on the contrary, a good thing that we should carry them, now protested that he had religious objections. I could, in his case, believe that it was an honest change of opinion, but about the way in which one after another

up to six went on allying themselves with the objectors, I have no opinion but one, that they were playing with truth under the notion that ideas of self-respect and dignity together with the prestige of a battle were good excuse for using the formula of religion. In the battle of truth against falsehood, of good against evil, wherein we have discarded all the weapons and trust to the aid of spiritual weapons only, it is a fatal error to allow Satan to find his way into our fortress. All our strength would be gone beyond recovery if we allowed falsehood to poison our souls. We should overreach ourselves if we attempted to overreach Truth.

The Acting Jailor came and made a long confessional history of his official and private life which it would be impossible to record here. We have sometimes the most curious mixtures of character in this world. The common idea, associating suavity of temper and tact with an easy conscience, and an ill-tempered brutality in outward conduct with honesty, is as wrong as many another popular notion.

Ram Saran, of whom Hira Singh had spoken to me highly, I saw for the first time yesterday. As I expected, he is rather a disturbing factor. He belongs to that too common type, with mind unconvinced about non-violence and Satyagraha but, for the sake of the objective, trying to be with the non-co-operators.

I saw Hira Singh again after a long while yesterday. Ever since I left hospital, I had not met him. His trouble has not been cured. I believe it is some kind of 'fistula'. He looks as if he won't last long, brave soul. I wish they gave him some better diet and looked after him.

Subba Rao to-day has sent round a 'confession'. He writes to say that he has realised his error in raising religious objections to carrying his own filth, that he repents his conduct and that he has therefore inflicted on himself the punishment of taking the common night pots of the block from the room and placing them outside, though there is a scavenger for the work. I was so glad to find that this young man saw the mistake he had been led into. I sent him in reply an extract from what I had written above. He is, I fear, getting morbid in temperament. I wish those around him took care to keep him in good spirits. He is really an inimitably fine young fellow. He would be a first rate Ashramite at Sabarmati. Finished Arathuppal in *Kural* last night.

8.2.22.

Wednesday. Had a bad fit of the asthma last night and feel very weary. No spinning to-day. Did much of Socrates. Rendered the whole of

Crito. Phaedo must be a more difficult task. But perhaps much of it may be omitted as most of the philosophy would be commonplace for Indian readers. I desire only to make them realise the greatness and character of the Greek martyr. I hope I will have the time to finish this work and add to it a brief story of the martyrdom of Christ. I shall not have been in prison in vain if I am able to do this little thing at least.*

9.2.22.

Thursday. Slight fever. Can't trace the reason for this, unless it be the mosquitoes and malaria, for my stomach has been in better than usual order.

No spinning to-day either; mostly took rest. Did portion of Phaedo.

10.2.22.

Friday. The telegram I sent to the office has not been despatched, neither has the letter that has come from home been delivered to me yet. It seems the Superintendent has gone away to Madras, and things have to wait for him. If Dr. Rajan, Kothandaraman and Sastri, are all arrested, (and inoffensive Souriraya Pillai too), Adinarayana Chettiar has to take up the Congress office work; and with Ramanathan's help the work may go on smoothly. Rajagopalan would be of great assistance, but I don't know whether his nerves will permit his service being placed at our disposal. I don't think he can work except with me. With me he has worked very hard, even to the point of physical breakdown, but with others he is notoriously difficult.

The mosquitoes in these cells make a regular hell of it during the night, and the flies in the daytime are a nuisance beyond compare. The big association blocks are more airy and, not being so near the kitchen, there may be less of the vermin, but from all accounts the bugs, and possibly also the lice, are a big trouble there, on account of the large number of unwashed prisoners and their beds in each room. So I had better make no attempt to get out of the frying pan. I am glad to see that Mr.Narasimhachariar, Vakil of Guntur, who was thinning down and looking ill, is now looking quite healthy. So also has Md. Hussain got over his 'fever face' and is adding to his weight. Mr. Shafiuk is still not in good health. Lakshmi-

* I could not carry out this plan of adding the life of Christ.

narayana is flourishing. Poor Srinivasa Iyengar has lost tremendous quantities of flesh. He is one of those who have grasped the principle of Satyagraha better than others. He is of a flabby constitution and the doctor does not seem to think much about his great loss of weight; but loss of fat by one whose natural build is flabby, when it is produced by unintended causes, is not good, and may finally mean a breakdown of vital organs.*

I am glad that the story about Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali's hunger strike, which appears to have encouraged some of the friends in the close prison here to do likewise, is now contradicted. A similar story is current about Lajpat Rai, on which Ram Saran builds up his advice to give trouble, which has not yet been contradicted to our knowledge. It is a great pity, from many points of view, that we are not allowed any newspapers. *Young India* at least might have been allowed. The other day Lakshminarayana said in joke, no doubt, that he would give up half his rations for a newspaper. What an appetite for the daily sheet have we developed! The Jailor thought it useful, from the anti-non-co-operation point of view, to frighten me with news of a terrible "Volunteer" disturbance somewhere in the North and fire opened by the Govt. forces and great loss of life and other casualities. Our Jailor is incapable of reading a newspaper or understanding public events. But from the story of his life that he gave me, I am not surprised at his incapacity.

Finished Socrates. Must revise it and also try my hand at the martyrdom of Christ. Poor Rangam Chettiar has been long in hospital. He appears to have asked to see me.

11.2.22.

Saturday. The night was insufferable. The mosquitoes fill the cell. The breeze outside whistles through the leaves of the trees all the night long, but inside the cell there is not the least movement of air. The single window is too high and narrow, and the cell door is in between two projections of masonry which effectively keep out all movement of air. The mosquitoes seem to be a violent type, for they sting sharply and through thick Khaddar, and get in through the least little gap in your covering which you may keep open for breathing. I suppose putting one in a cell of this sort, with a single hole six feet from the floor for a window, is 'special treatment' for political prisoners. Perhaps I am too bitter, but

* This gentleman died shortly after release from prison.

after a sleepless night this may be excused.

Had a letter from Gandhiji, besides one from home. The former is scrupulously non-political and dated the 3rd February from Bardoli. "I was glad and thankful to get your note. You certainly miss nothing by not having newspapers. And I do envy your spinning wheel and Ramayana. The latter, I hope, is not a wretched translation of Valmiki, but the original of Kamban of which I have read so much in Pope's Tamil Handbook. You must not lose flesh. I thought, in our company I was the lowest weight. But you beat me by fully 10 lbs. now. I hope you are allowed plenty of milk. Let me prescible for you. If you can get milk and plenty of sweet juicy fruit--oranges or grapes, you will get rid of your asthma and gain in weight. Devadas is in Allahabad. Kristodas and Ramdas look after me. You are not the ony one to enjoy your solitude. Sundaram is just now at the Ashram undergoing a vow of silence. He has read too much and thought so little. His silence may do him good. Yours sincerely, M.K.G."

The letter from home was disappointing in that neither Lakshmi nor Narasimhan has written anything in it. But Lakshmi has put her little signature under what Papa wrote; neither Narasimhan nor Ramu has written anything from Salem.

Warder Kesava Pillay has been sent off on other duty, as he was found to be negligent. He left the compound gate not locked properly one night, which the Chief Warder saw the next morning and summoned him to the Tower, and sent him on gang duty. He came to-day and took his Pattanathu Pillaiar from me.

Non-official visitor Padmanabha Naidu was here again yesterday. He follows the inefficient method of talking un-officially to the Deputy Jailor and others, to put matters right. The jail officials are adepts in the art of talking nicely to people and putting them off. Nothing but official pressure does any good with them.

My tomato supply is as irregular as anything can be.

12.2.22.

Sunday. My telegrams asking Chettiar, Ramanathan, and Ramaswami Naicker to come up for an interview were not sent up at first, because the Superintendent was away at Madras. When they were brought back to me, I withheld them to see the letter I had from home, which was also delayed for two days. I sent the telegrams again yesterday early in the morning. As ill-luck would have it, they were sent up with the bicycle

orderly who goes for the post, and one of them (marked by me Express for urgent despatch) was brought bck as the Postal official was too dense to understand the multiple address I had given. Then it was sent by a warder on foot. The jail is about three miles from the Vellore Post Office. I suppose the message would have reached Salem at 6 P.M. and been of little use for the purpose intended, unless my lads don't come to-day but to-morrow.

I went up to see Rangam Chetty yesterday. Poor fellow -- I little knew he had been so ill -- he looks like a ghost. He told me how death had stared him in the face. He swore he saw Yama's men who called him to go with them. He swore at them and turned them away, and was saved. But he says that within a few minutes of this dream of his, another patient breathed his last. He is past danger now. It was amusing to hear him say that his only anxiety had been that his body would be cut up without a decent funeral if he died in the hospital and that he was wanting to see me only to avert this.

13.2.22.

Monday. parade day as usual.
"Well, all right?" "Quite all right, thank you."

I had thought of asking and mentioning many things but thought better over it, and the above was the result.

My lads did not come to see me yesterday as my brother wrote. Possibly my messages received late by them have upset their programme. They have not come even today.

Government appears to be making a great attempt to rally the people round itself once again. The crocodile tears they shed over Civil Disobedience leading to subversion of peace and happy domestic life, must be enough to drown even a whole nation. But, really, the remedy is in their hands. We did not choose Civil Disobedience, disruption of domestic felicity, and untold suffering, for the pleasure or the fun of it, but because we prefer these to continuing in servitude and dishonour. Government can prevent the sufferings of the people, if really their mind is so moved, as they make it out to be, by conceding the people's demands, instead of asking them to stop the movement because of the suffering it involves. It is a wonderful mixture of hypocrisy, pride, and self-interest, which yet may deceive some people.

They are making a heroic effort at self-defence by pleading that disobedience was resolved upon by Gandhiji even before the Criminal

Law Amendment Act was applied against the volunteer bodies. No doubt we resolved on Civil Disobedience for righting our wrongs. But the crime and folly of making all Congress work criminal does not become any the less a crime for that reason. It hastened our pace in an unexpected manner, but there is no meaning in confusing the issue on that pretext. Both the Government of India's reply to Gandhiji's manifesto and Lord Ronaldshay's speech seek to cover their retreat in this manner.

14.2.22.

Tuesday. Krishnaswami and Ramaswami Naicker came yesterday evening and saw me, but the others did not come up from Salem. I requested the Jailor to treat the interview as unfinished and to permit the others to come up to-day. There was some difficulty in arranging this, but it was overcome, and I saw them all again to-day. The younger Pudupalayam Zamindar and Krishnaswami Chettiar had come, besides Adinarayana Chettiar and Narasimha Iyengar. Ramu and Narasimhan also came. Duraswami too. So it was a full meeting.

Congress affairs are very depressing. The violence at Gorakhpur appears to have set back everything. I cannot judge well from here, with little information about things and out of touch with the atmosphere prevailing. But I fear the decision to let things remain inactive now is wrong. To set a stale programme before the people at a time when repression is in full swing, is likely to set the clock back. I am, however, too much depressed, and may see things in a better light later on. Let me pray. So many of my most trusted fellow-workers have gone to jail, that I feel when I go out I shall be even more lonely than I am here. How should Gandhiji have been feeling all these days when all his fellow-workers have been snatched away and he has been left quite alone.

15.2.22.

Wednesday. In the absence of the sturdy leaders of various provinces who are all now in prison, and especially of the Ali Brothers, Gandhiji's decisions are not balanced by every consideration that the position of an emasculated nation necessitates. While they were with him, it looked as if they acted mostly as clogs, but when they are away, one sees their function. The decision practically to suspend all thoughts of Civil Disobedience and to go back to membership enrolment, i.e., from war to

peace, is likely to be a grievous blow to Bengal, Andhra, and U.P. Tamil Madras, though it cannot have made much headway in any department, will lose proportionately more severely than other provinces by this retreat. It is a misfortune that Bombay did not take to prison-going seriously.

Missed my prayer for the first time this morning, having slept on till 6 A.M., when the cell door was opened. The officials do not, when passing along the verandah before the opening of the cells, shout 'Rise, Rise,' at these two or three cells, out of consideration for us. The Jailor, in apprent jubilation, told me this morning that non-co-operation had gone to sleep. Gandhi had cried halt to Civil Disobedience. I did not waste time over this with him. I bitterly complained to him that the settlement I had arrived at with the Superintendent in respect of the treatment of political prisoners had not been carried out properly. New-comers are put on the heaviest work available in the jail. Other items too have been entirely ignored. He pleads inability. There seems to be some bad faith in all this. I just learn that a young man who was ordered to pump water has vomited blood, and has been sent to the hospital.*

The Jailor told me that there was a likelihood of all political prisoners being concentrated in one prison in the Province. This must be, to Jail authorities, a great relief. All that they want is that inconvenient light should not be thrown on jail administration. They object to the nuisance of the reforming influence. They are unable and unwilling to get out of the barbarities and corruptions of their administration. They have no other animus against political prisoners.

How beautifully does my neighbour Md. Ghouse's 'la illa' mix with my own silent prayer! Yet, how the two communities hated, warred with, and killed each other, and how much misunderstanding still continues!

16.2.22.

Thursday. Now that the time of my release is approaching, I begin to see how flat freedom will seem to me. Looking about, I will only see a deserted field, with none of my loving fellow-workers visible anywhere. If within the month that still remains, no change in outlook or programme of work comes about, I wonder how I shall adjust myself to the dreary atmosphere.

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* I subsequently learnt that this man was at once relieved of this work. He is an epileptic.

Learnt at 8 P.M. to-day (Thursday) of Gandhiji's fast. He has once again discovered that a mob will commit violence of a kind, the cowardice and brutality of which gives a shock to his whole nature, even though the non-co-operation movement (and a critical phase of it) is being contemplated at the time, even though the perpetrators sympathise with the aims and objects of the movement, and have, times without number, heard Ahimsa preached.

Either he must be convinced that Congress Volunteers perpetrated or encouraged the murders at Gorakhpur, or he must definitely postulate an impossible condition precendent for his movement, that mobs that anywise connect themselves by mere sympathy with the aims and objects of the movement, should refrain from violence just as much as the organisers and partakers of the movement itself. Non-co-operation commands almost universal sympathy in India, and so this condition would come to this : that there should be no serious crimes of violence committed by anybody in India while the movement is on. Unless the cause of the suspension of the programme (and his five days' fast) is that Congress workers committed and encouraged the murders, I feel that it is a confession that the programme is discovered to be a moral impossibility.

I fully realise the gravity of the offence of the mob at Gorakhpur. But, in spite of my tenderest and most complete attachment to my master and the ideal he stands for, I fail to see why there should be a call for stopping our struggle for birthrights because of such events. The Malabar atrocities were a much greater reason, if Gorakhpur be a good reason. No, I fail to see from here, (in seclusion and without materials, it is true) the logicality of the grave step taken.

But God leads us right where logic may not. I feel that the nation is not strong enough to lose Gandhiji now, and his arrest and imprisonment were imminent, and it is only an event of this sort that Providence could interpose to prevent our losing him. Again, I feel also that the nation is yet not strong enough for the sacrifices called for and an early settlement may be in the plan of Providence. A settlement is in the highest degree probable now.

Meanwhile, the fast for five days may prove too much in his present condition of body, due to age and ill-health.

17.2.22.

Friday. Passed a night of real terror like to those that I had often known seven years ago and before. Sat up like a ghost, and found some relief

in lighting my candle and heating some water on it, for sipping. A solitary cell is not the place for asthma of the nervous type. However, the comparative facility I have now acquired at concentration and prayer (though yet far from satisfactory) helped me to forget the trouble.

Information that Hakim Ajmal Khan and Moulana Azad Sobhani have intimated to Gandhiji from the disturbed area that Mass Civil Disobedience was impossible owing to violent outbreaks; that Bardoli operations would infect the disturbed areas also; and that, therefore, the Bardoli campaign should be stopped. There is also news that certain volunteer bodies in the affected areas were disbanded by Congress Committee authorities. Unless this last is an act due to fear of local oppression and punitive measures, these things suggest that Congress volunteers were involved largely in the disturbances. Anyway, there seems to be more reason behind the Working Committee's decision than appeared at first sight.

Yet, I am not convinced that Gandhiji's idea, that the mass mind will be trained to non-violence by repeated propaganda, is right. There has been repetition of the idea and reiteration of this condition *ad nauseam*. Yet, mobs break into anger when provocation is offered.

No amount of writing, no amount of lecturing, will bring about the change that is desired more than is at present achieved : What is wanted is example and trial. The policy of suspension at every distant and unconnected outburst, gives no chance for example. Discipline, not knowledge, is what is wanted. Mere knowledge can be given by propaganda. But discipline can be got only by personal trial, failure, and example.

A certain amount of ill-considered high speed was pitched as a necessary condition in our first programme, which was the cause of not a few of the troubles and failures. We have now all the disadvantages of a retreat; -- with the mass-mind, a retreat is a great handicap to work with.

18.2.22.

Saturday. No news yet about Gandhiji after the fast. To the loneliness I am dreading to find myself in, upon release from prison, is now added the depression of failure and absence of scope for work. I cannot find any light yet to lift us out of the darkness we are in. Are we going to get a few paces forward in Reforms as a result of all the terrible sacrifices that we non-co-operators have made? This could well have been achieved

by steady and contented work in the old "constitutional" way, without all this grievous suffering that thousands of families have borne in the great hope of Swaraj. Self-purification and strengthening there has been, no doubt. But this is, alas, not what the "earth" in us can be satisfied with, and the price has been too heavy in so many cases. No, it will take me long to reconcile myself to a few changes in the Imperial and Local Governments as a satisfactory termination to this great struggle. But I blame no one. The nation is too weak, too far gone in economic misery, to be able to fight and win in one campaign. We have to carry on many campaigns before we can reach our goal.

Had to take the asthma mixture at midnight and then had some rest, with a few breaks.

The Andhra friends have again been communicating to me their grievances. They complain that the Superintendent has not kept his promises made at the settlement. The chief complaints are about baths not being allowed daily to the rigorous prisoners and about the separate cooking. They want the curry alone to be prepared by themselves, but the jail authorities want them to do the entire cooking. This is heavy work and is perhaps intended merely to frighten them out of the idea. The Jail people do not want any innovation in the kitchen and ration arrangements. This is what Mr. Chauduri says, and I am inclined to agree. How I can help or interfere in the matter, I can't see as yet. It is reasonable, outwardly, that separate cooking should be undertaken as a whole, or not at all, whatever the motives of the insistence may be.

The jail is getting whitewashed (in the literal sense) all over, against the expected visit of the I.G. Narayanasami, our waterman convict, is for once hard worked. Poor man, he is in jail now only for his fine, his substantive term having been served out.

A young fellow here puts the convict problem in a nut-shell. He awaits his release in nine days. He is a first offender. He bought a new, fine, tempting piece of cloth for Rs.2 from a fellow who proved to be a thief. The latter was not caught, but the lad who bought the cloth was convicted. "People who go out come in again at once : what shall we do for this?" he asked pathetically. His own case was not a difficult one. He has father and mother and a family that work on a field taken on varam; so he can be absorbed in his family and be protected against a second offence or charge. But the ordinary man who has no such resource, but has to be a mere cooly and look out for himself, is in a sad plight. Hence, he comes in again and again, and puts on the old convict's black cap and makes the

best of jail life as his only hope. It makes one sad to see some of the prisoners -- a large number are criminally lazy and evade work, and a great deal more efficient supervision is necessary to set matters right -- so hard working, so efficient and even conscientious in doing their task, under compulsion leading such well disciplined lives, without drink, and without any other sin, yet slaving for nothing. If only they led such hard lives of purity and discipline in their own homes, how happy and properous they and their families could be! As soon as one of these is released, I suppose he takes a day's holiday and drinks, and then all the discipline is lost, and he is the old man again.

Weighment to-day shows me steady at 101 lbs. again.

20.2.22.

Monday. To-day's early morning news is that the Prison King's weekly parade has been postponed to to-morrow. This is to enable him to see to the execution of a condemned prisoner which is fixed for to-morrow and to do the parade the same morning. He will have to get up early in the morning for the execution -- it is usually finished before 6 A.M. And why should he bother to get out of bed on two consecutive days in the week so early in the morning?

Appadurai, the butler, is to be hanged to-morrow. Night after night, I used to hear the chatter of gallows friendship. The Sepoy would cry "Appavu! Appavu!," "Nagiah! Nagiah!," and they would carry on a conversation, each from his own cell. The chatter would go on every night till I went to sleep. Great latitude is allowed to these condemned prisoners by the warders, for they have found that there is no effective sanction in respect of prisoners who have been already condemned to the worst punishment in the Code. "Nagiah!" ceased for some months past : for the poor fellow was hanged one fine morning. For some days, the leader in the conversation 'the Sepoy' was talking of Nagiah being in Heaven and eating his full meal with God; -- Eating is the chief event in prisons. One will find it so if one comes to jail, like us. Then, after two or three days, there was nothing more about Nagiah. From tomorrow Appavu also will disappear likewise. If I gathered rightly from the talks I heard, Appavu leaves behind him at least ten children.

Among the barbarities of the jail practices is one, which ought to be reformed at once -- that of hanging men without giving them any notice. The poor fellow does not know when he will be taken away. He is kept

for many weeks, sometimes months, waiting for the appeal to the High Court and the petitions to the Local and Imperial Governments to be disposed of. These take long enough to make him get over the idea of nearness to death, which might have chastened his mind in the beginning. Then, without ministration of religion or prayer, or any thoughts of God, he is seized one morning when he does not expect anything like it, and taken away, arms bound, and there at the gallows his legs are fettered and a cap put over his head and in a few minutes the platform goes down and he is despatched. Mostly, not even relations know about it, and they do not come, therefore, to take the dead body. It is recorded as unclaimed and made the best public use of, probably for medical college dissection. What does the bureaucrat care for religious ministration or prayer unless there comes a distinct G.O. about it when, of course, it will be scrupulously attended to as a piece of bureaucratic discipline!

Appadurai is a Christian, but that will make no difference. Christianity, though it is his own professed religion, is not much of an influence with the bureaucrats. It won't alter his usual conduct. His religion is the "G.O." and these G.O.'s are made and revealed from time to time in such manner as to get things efficiently done without causing risk or annoyance or trouble to white officers, and not more than what is absolutely unavoidable, to other officers, provided their salary is above Rs.200 a month. In fact, the grand principle of responsibility, in a bureaucracy, is that only the lowest in the grade shall be fully responsible, and all the others shall as far as possible be free from blame for any mishap. The ascending order of irresponsibility is the life-principle of bureaucracy.

The jail authorities won't give a single thought to whether Appadurai may not make his peace with God before he yields up his life. That is not their concern. They are concerned only with getting the execution done without any hitch on the day fixed.

Poor Nainamalai Konan's petition has been rejeted by the Local Government. I don't know who among the Government Members is in charge of his department; but he seems to be most careless, or heartless in the extreme. Life is so precious; yet bureaucracy values it differently. This fellow is only twenty years old. The evidence is only circumstantial. The jewels he is said to have produced might be those which the deceased woman wore, but nobody knows whether he was the murderer or ony an accomplice in securing the jewels. A lad known to be of previous good character might have been given a chance to serve twenty years in prison and come out free at least when he is forty years old.

21.2.22.

Tuesday. I was up early this morning – perhaps the thought of the man to be executed woke me up before time. I was sitting up in my bed praying, so also Mohamed Ghouse in the next cell. He was singing out the Azan. "Have they come, have they come?" occasionally enquired the sepoy, and they did come after some minutes which looked very long; and the unfortunate man was hurried away hand-cuffed, as I could understand from the tread of the people. In a few minutes the chief warder returned on his usual round and passed my cell, from which I knew that Appadurai's life had been ended by law. Man deliberately took away what God gave, all the time imagining that it was just and right to do so. However, I have no business to moralise over the death of a single man when millions of lives are being taken away every day by men without a thought about it. The animals have as good a right to live as men, and their daily slaughter cries aloud to God.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar was here to-day. He talked long with me, and he went round and saw the other non-co-operators also, and then, after spending a few minutes with the Superintendent, went away for his case before the Sub-court in Vellore. He is very much disappointed with Gandhiji's latest instructions, but I cannot understand his own desire in the matter. He is opposed to mass civil disobedience; he does not like people going to jail even in individual disobedience. Still he feels in some inexpressible and vague kind of way that the movement should have a stirring programme. He was trying to give me logical definitions of his position, but I was not able to follow him. What I could make out was something like this: that people should go to jail and keep up the fight, but everybody should not go. A careful and judicious selection should be made so that active propaganda work outside may not suffer. He emphasised he was more optimistic now. He told me about the National Club. I hope it will not become the nucleus of a new party without any constructive programme, but only intended to obstruct the Congress executive.

22.2.22.

Wednesday. I fear we will be thoroughly spoilt before we go out of this jail. Some few of us – who have lost weight – will be given butter-milk, half an anna worth each, daily, subsequently reduced to quarter anna worth each. The butter-milk may be poor, but the thing

brings us the smell and atmosphere of home life.

The Andhras have at last got their own cooking. Mr. Lakshminarayana insists that the Superintendent told him that they should cook everything except kunjee early morning, and that, too, not for all non-co-operators but only for the Andhras. He says that having agreed to this, they cannot accept my suggestion to cook only kolambu, and include the Tiruvannamalai people also. The jailor told me that kolambu alone may be cooked and for the Tiruvannamalai people also. I do not wish to interfere in this, and shall leave it to Mr. Lakshminarayana to arrange just as the Andhras wish.

24.2.22.

Friday. I was able to settle the cooking affair referred to above satisfactorily. All the non-co-operators, including the Tiruvannamalai people, will have the advantage of separate cooking. I tasted the kolambu thus prepared. With the same rations, why should this kolambu be so much better than what the ordinary prisoners in the jail get? Will no one look into this and, preventing theft and corruption, remove one of the greatest miseries of prisoners? Non-co-operators who have to be in prison for a different and a greater cause, cannot well take up this question of purity of administration as cause for aggressive action, but can only point it out to co-operator politicians for solution.

Finished Margoliath's *Mahommed* in the 'Heroes of the Nations' Series. Krishnaswami left the book for me to amuse myself with, when he was last here. The author's treatment of the Prophet is unsatisfactory.

The book makes the Prophet a man of great talent and unbounded ambition. It works up the whole history of his message on the centre motive-pivot of political ambition. The biographer assumes that the Prophet has as little faith as himself and, therefore that he worked up the whole of his life and message as a keen and ambitious man to gain his end – which is not to become a Prophet, but to become a head of a State by becoming a Prophet. The theory of the biographer is that Mahommed was "steering for the destination" of personal distinction and influence all the time. An irony runs throughout the psychology presented by the author. The author's own unbelief disables him from seeing any springs for human action except in a motive for the betterment of one's position. If a non-Muslim cannot write a good biography of Mahommed, much less can a total unbeliever.

In relating the early progress of Islam, the biographer appears to be suffering from a pre-conceived idea that the worship of the pre-Islamic Arabs was entirely devoid of any idea of a single God, and attributes the idea of Allah which undoubtedly existed in it to the influence of the Jews and the Christians. Polytheists, like the Hindus, can understand how the idea of the Supreme Being is blended with the worship of idols. But our author assumes that the Arabs had absolutely nothing in their religion except superstition, and that the Jews and the Christians furnished Mahommed copy for his monotheism. Mahommed is described as having used Abu Bakr's credulity to make him invite men to recognise his own claims. The author revels in a persistent comparison of the Prophet with Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, and even makes him a cleverer and bigger trickster than the latter. If Mahommed did not run away, when persecuted, to an asylum in a neighbouring Christian State, it was because he did not want to be a subject in safety, but aimed at sovereignty. The book abounds with many morally unfavourable hypotheses, based on mere conjecture, to explain away Mahommed's successes at obtaining converts. It makes his affability and peaceful temperament a mere case of deep sagacity and caution and a waiting for opportunity.

The biographer's unbelief and antipathy rises to a climax when dealing with the migration to Medina. He exhibits bitter disappointment that "there was not a man in Mecca who could strike a blow and act and be ready to accept the responsibility for acting;" that "many as were Mahomed's ill-wishers, there was not one of them, who had this sort of courage"; that "there was no magistracy by which he could be tried" (like Jesus, and executed, presumably). Even the description of an escape from assassination is in a language that indicates disappointment which reaches the point of brutality, e.g., when the reader is gratuitously told that Ali, who was sleeping in Mahomed's blanket when the assassins came, could have been captured for a hostage, but that the Kuraishites were too chivalrous for such a proceeding. There is not a word of praise for Ali's courage and fidelity. The author's disappointment at the failure of plots for assaissination is seen again when Abrad and Amir's story is referred to. No more dignified or respectful phraseology is employed than "convicts escaping from prison" when describing Mahomed's thrilling escape from Mecca and retirement to a cave to avoid pursuit. This disappointment with Mahomed's success makes the author most bitter and angry with the Jews. "Had they (the Jews) any plan, any resolution, any courage, they would have utilised this period of failure and ignominy to crush him."

Why the work of writing a life of Mahomed as a 'hero' of his nation was entrusted to one who apparently boiled with antipathy towards the hero, one cannot understand. The whole scheme of the book is to look upon Mahomed as a political adventurer having the minimum of morality, planning a career, and unscrupulously working out the plan. No place is given to earnestness of conviction, inspiration, religious zeal, or virtues of personality. For the rapid and remarkable success of the Prophet's message, the biographer throughout finds out explanations in fraud, corruption, self-interest, faction or gullibility. The unalterable fidelity of the Medina men is matter for flippant irony. It furnishes the biographer no clue to the force of the Prophet's personal life and character. The systematic use of the term "leading articles" for the Surhas of the Kuran, is hardly worthy of decent biography. The term "Apostle of God" is sneeringly used in appropriate places. Yet, in the Preface the author promises to write "respectfully" about the Prophet!

It is a relief to find a genuine attempt at fairness, after all, in the final remarks about the destruction of the Jews at Medina. But, even here, the author's failure to appreciate the value of religious faith is characteristic. He is surprised that so very few of the Jews availed themselves of the alternative of Islam offered to them. He cannot understand how large numbers of people prefer their faith to their lives.

The modern unbeliever cannot but see the history of a great faith and the life of its founder all topsy-turvy. A glaring example of this is that this biographer cannot see that it was the religious movement that was the prime factor in the early history of Islam, and that the political upheaval came in as an inevitable consequence. He cannot realise that men care ever so much for their faith. He can understand, and needs no explanations for it, that men care for political power. So he makes out that Mahomed's was a political ambition, and believes that the religious movement was started because the political end could be gained only thereby. He even suggests that this "example" of Mahomed impressed other conspirators (see the reference to the Mosque of Dissent).

The story of a domestic quarrel between the Prophet and his wives over his refusal to give them household supplies according to their wishes is related merely for the sake of ridicule. The value of the episode, which proves that in the midst of wealth and tribute taken from many conquered tribes and towns Mahomed was a poor man by choice, is lost sight of.

With all the evident desire of this biographer to explain away virtues and find a vicious motive for every apparently good act, he is unable to

belittle the liberality and generosity shown by the Prophet at the taking of Mecca. The temple treasury was not touched. There was no proscription of any of the citizens. All past injuries were left unavenged in that hour of triumph. Not even the houses of the refugees which had been seized and sold by the Meccans were touched. Even the keys of the temple were not taken away from the hereditary holders. If any Meccans were killed without authority, justice was rendered by Mahomed.

In spite of the unsympathetic treatment of the biographer, the character of Mahomed stands out too clear to be mistaken. A man of great natural affection, devoid of fanaticism, guided by reasons of humanity and sound policy, always respected by his fellow citizens for his great uprightness of character and trustworthiness, when he attained power and authority, he allowed himself no day of rest, and worked as hard as the most industrious of sovereigns. He managed both the external and internal affairs of the vast and growing community he had founded. Always smiling, he at times threw aside the gravity belonging to his office. In no case did he injure his adminsitration by nepotism in spite of his numerous relatives. He never allowed them to interfere with the course of justice. Squatting in his poor apartment, with a veil over his face, and a palm leaf branch in his hand, he gave and took away crowns. There was no detail of conduct too trivial to be made the subject of an appeal to the Prophet. Amidst all the duties of General, Legislator, Judge, and Diplomat, the Prophet did not neglect those of preacher and teacher. His punishments were characterised by mildness. Mutilation and torture were forbidden. So early as the 7th century, he prohibited the burning of offenders, which barbarity was retained among Christian nations even up to the nineteenth century. His humanity extended itself even to the lower animals. He prohibited the employment of living birds as targets and remonstrated against ill-treatment of camels. He prohibited the docking of the tails of horses. He once compelled some of his followers to extinguish a fire they had set to an ant-hill. Foolish acts of cruelty connected with superstitions were swept away.

For women Mahommed's system achieved much. The condition of slaves and captives was relieved by many humane regulations. For example, the parting of the mothers from their children, or of brothers, was prohibited. Scourging was discouraged and murder was not punishable with retaliation. Manumission was greatly encouraged. Slaves were allowed a system whereby they could contract for their own manumission. Heirless estates were inherited by the slaves. Moslems were asked to feed

and clothe their slaves like themselves. He made elaborate regulations for inheritance, the equitable character of which is recognised by jurists. All his work he did within the remarkably short period of only a few years, and left it in such a condition that his death was not followed by disintegration as in other cases, but by increased progress.

25.2.22.

Saturday. More friends have come in from Nellore. I understand that some will be coming in by transfer from Trichinopoly Jail.

Our line of cells which was left all to ourselves is now fairly full. Nine Moplah prisoners who took part in the Cannanore Jail riot have been put into the nine cells to the south of my cell. All of them wear that unalloyed barbarity — the bar-fetters. The irons were removed, I was glad to see, after a few days.

The Superintendent and his two Sub-Assistant Surgeons turned up at my cell this morning. "Your letter to Mr. Gandhi has alarmed him", said the Major. "He has put in a note in the *Young India*. He compares your case with some other unfortunate prisoner elsewhere; says, some one else is given newspapers, while you are not, and so on."

When I asked him whether I could see the note, he said he had not the paper. I wonder, then, how he got to know about it. However it might be, he discussed with me for a long time my diet, and subsequently took an exact inventory of it, I don't known for what purpose. I had a very bad night yearterday and the spasms and weariness continue in the daytime today also. But I don't see what the jail people can do for it, as I told the Superintendent this morning.

The condemned sepoy behind my cell is going through a crisis. The day before yesterday, for long in the night, he was reciting verses in praise of God and Rama and assuring the human soul of Divine Grace and calling for resignation. He was preaching in soldier-like style to his neighbour Rama Reddy and wound up with "you have no courage. Pluck up, man, go straight to Death like a bold man. I won't talk to you henceforth unless you are brave." Today he refused to take food. He says he must be given rice meals or be executed. "I have not cared to appeal to the Government for mercy. Why am I bothered thus with ragi cake?" he asks. Indeed, I don't see why a poor fellow condemned to death and refusing to appeal should not have, if he wants it, such a wretchedly modest luxury as a rice meal. I hope the jailor will remember to carry out his promise to me

and give the poor chap his rice for the few days he has yet to live.

My friend Alladi was here today. We had a long chat and then went round to the main non-co-operation block (No.1) and saw all the inmates. It was pleasant to see our friends trooping out of the cells there with brave and cheerful faces.

So I see that the Government of India have made it clear that they are not satisfied with the Bardoli truce. They want nothing short of a total and final repeal of the Congress programme. That they will never get. For them there is no need for any compromise. It is absolute ignorance of human nature that makes the Government of India talk thus. Their stubbornness may be feigned. But if it is genuine, then it is good for us. Providence is leading them to help us forward to the end we seek to reach. The Government's interpretation of the Bardoli programme puts the matter clearer than Gandhiji is able to put it before the people. In this the old truth is again seen that our enemies are our best interpreters and judges.

So Ramanathan is in for three months' rigorous along with others for various terms ranging from two to six months. Ramanathan is due for release on 22nd May.

Mahomed Hussain gave me two nice jam tins. The Superintendent had said I might have jam for my bread and the Jailor promised to buy it for me. But Mahomed 'prevents' delay.

26.2.22.

Sunday. Weightment today shows 102 lbs. Md. Ghouse weights 125 lbs, i.e., he has come back to his correct weight, so he thinks. But according to the entry, he has gained five lbs. in jail. Since the middle of January, i.e., for five weeks past, the special diet sanctioned for me has been 4 oz. of wheat (made into two thin unleavened chappatis), a six ounce loaf-bread, two pints of milk, 1 oz. of butter, an ounce and a half of sugar, and 3 oz. of sago. The last, I have not been taking, but giving away to the malee. To make the list absolutely complete, I may add I have been having a drink of warm rice-water, thin and absolutely free from rice grains, early in the morning.

The result of the Superintendent's enquiry into my diet has been a change in the diet from today. I shall henceforth have no loaf-bread and the milk is reduced to 1 1/2 pints. I will have 4 oz. of wheat, one oz. of butter, 1 1/2 pints of milk, a little sugar, 4 oz. of sago (for the midday meal)

and two ollocks of buttermilk. The buttermilk was reduced the next day to one ollock per day, and raised to two o'clocks after a few days. The milk also was after some days raised again from 1 1/2 to 2 pints, and Benger's food (for the evening meal). I cook the Benger's food myself. So a stove has been left with me.

The sago which I have been rejecting I must now take as my principal day-meal. With buttermilk, instead of milk, and with a pinch of salt, I think I shall manage it. The milk is poor, being, I believe, churned and deprived of butter before supply.

27.2.22.

Monday. I intended asking the Superintendent to move me to Block 1. The ventilation is so very poor in this cell, and especially in the first part of the night it is so close and full of mosquitoes. In the big wards there are big windows which come up to the level of the sleeping platform, and so there is a free passage of air. Besides, I might have the company of friends for at least a couple of weeks before I am discharged. The Superintendent has fallen ill, I understand, and has not come on his usual weekly visits today. But I have told the Sub-Assistant Surgeon about it.

I don't know if it is due to the mosquitoes, occasionally I feel a slight fever. Last night I had it and I am dosing myself with quinine.

The 4 oz. of sago, boiled, is really too much for me to take even with the buttermilk and salt. I give away at least a third of it to the jadumalee.

News that the All India Congress Committee meeting was adjourned to late in the evening, to await the decision of the Working Committee which is having prolonged deliberations.

28.2.22.

Early in the morning the warder informed me that we three, Sastriar, Ghouse, and myself, should move to Block 1, and hurried us to be there before the Superintendent's arrival for the 'parade' (the name for his weekly round). So we went over to Block 1.

The pedantry of jail discipline here in Block 1 is much greater than what we were subjected to in the other place. After a long stay in the solitary cells we naturally feel somewhat congested in this place. The platforms are mostly only a foot apart, and some only a little over. Each prisoner has his platform. Sixteen persons are locked in each room. The latrine is unspeakably congested. My period of solitary confinement with

all its many advantages and a few disadvantages is now over. I am here in a sort of halfway house to being discharged into the outer world.

The All India Congress Committee has resolved practically on the continuation of the pre-Bardoli state of things in regard to all civil disobedience, except mass civil disobedience, which of course stands postponed to await better organisation. I am glad that the Working Committee has come to this resolution amending the original Bardoli decision.

The net result is a determined stand on both sides, between Government and Congress. The next three months will see a severe struggle.

1.3.22.

Wednesday. The vote of censure on Gandhiji, together with the abandonment of the principles and programme of the non-co-operation movement, that was proposed by Dr. Moonje at Delhi has been thrown out by an overwhelming majority. This is the first time that anti-Gandhism plucked up courage to assume the shape of a resolution. The draft resolution brought by the Working Committee will be passed without any material changes. The next question is, how far the people will be able to respond to the two parts of the plan – the constructive sterngthening of the organisation, and the prison campaign. There must be strenuous workers as well as response. Response depends on whether the people will not be depressed by the retreat and apparent failure. They may realise the advantage of quiet recovery of strength and seize the opportunity. The Government will also try to strengthen their position by repression as well as by increased propaganda.

Passed a quiet night in the new lodging. Had long discussions with my Aligarh friends, Mahomed Hussain and Shafiuk Rahman, about Islam and Mahomed.

2.3.22.

Thursday. The talkative sepoy, whose voice had become quite a part of my jail life in the solitary cells, was hanged this morning. It is truly a case where the man was perfectly willing to die. This is the third execution after my arrival here. The Sub-Assistant Surgeon, Visvanatha Iyer, who, of late, is very nice and free with me and has dropped entirely

the manner which was so repulsive, related to me how bravely the condemned man faced death. I am told they gave him mutton and cigars the previous day.

After coming to this ward I see more of the treatment accorded to political prisoners. The behaviour of the jail officials here is now very much better than what it was before. In many ways the treatment has improved. Heavy work and barbarities are all abolished. Insults of the grosser variety are gone. But still my anger is roused when I see the Chief Warder come up before we have hardly finished our noon meal and, in a tone unsuited for addressing gentlemen, order the "rigorous" prisoners to stand four abreast and march for work. Not that I do not see that work is right and discipline is right. But why should not the language of gentlemen be adopted where these people know very well that they are addressing gentlemen who have all voluntarily undertaken this submission to discipline and hardship.[1]

The Superintendent has not carried out his promise to me regarding the prayer dress for Mussalmans. Abdul Wahab bitterly complained to me to-day about it. They want some covering up to four inches below the knees. The Jail 'shorts' stop above the knee. If only the rigorous prisoners are permitted to take one of *their own* lungis or shorts which have been kept away on their admission into jail, it would serve for their prayer time. This is all they want and if this is refused, it cannot be claimed that the jail authorities do not interfere with the religion of the prisoners.[2]

The Superintendent promised me also that he would allow a daily bath to the "rigorous" prisoners as to the "simple" men. But subsequently this was reduced to three days in the week. The men agree to work the water lift themselves, as it was pleaded by the jailor that there was difficulty in getting enough prisoners for the water lift. They made a representation again to-day, but to no effect.

If the 'Indian Member' in charge of Jail administration really desires to give civilised treatment to political prisoners, it is no use depending on rules, regulations or instructions. The ordinary jail officials do not know how to keep gentlemen in prison. Their whole experience and all their ideas stand in the way of proper treatment, and rules will not improve matters. The only thing the Indian Member, if he is really earnest about it, should do, is to put all political prisoners of the province in one jail

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[1]The chief warder's manner changed for the better some days after my arrival here.
[2]This was later permitted.

specially reserved for them and put in carefully selected officers in charge. The one thing the present jail official fears is the interference with the ordinary jail discipline and rigour which special treatment of politicals will tend to cause. And while it may be hopeless to reform the Superintendents and Jailors of all the prisons, it may be quite easy to find one set of officers who may willingly and genuinely carry out a civilized policy. The Government of India, through Sir William Vincent, in pompous and circuitous language admit the barbarity of sentences inflicted in 'many' cases.

All this is relevent if Government honestly tries to follow civilised methods of dealing with political prisoners. But, for ourselves, there is only one way : faith in suffering. Nothing has so strengthened the nation as the cheerful manner in which numbers of the most cultured classes have undertaken to suffer, and are undergoing the rigours of the worst forms of jail life. All honour to them. It has been my privilege to live among so many of them in this jail. When we are out to conquer our enemy by showing up the worthlessness of his weapons, it is best to grapple with his worst weapons and disarm him straightaway.

3.3.22.

Friday. Feverish again last night.

The *Hindu*, I am told, is opposed to the resolution permitting Individual Civil Disobedience. The argument is, "Organise better till you are fit for Mass Civil Disobedience." Do not allow yourself to be crushed by the Government in little skirmishes. Leaders ought not sacrifice themselves till the whole country is ready for the big battle. This argument is plausible. But it is based on want of faith in the fundamental law of conquest by suffering. It ignores the immeasurable strength the nation is daily attaining through the suffering of its leaders. It is not true that Mass Disobedience is the only way to victory. The strengthening of the spirit of the nation is the essential requisite for the attainment of freedom by any means; and this is more rapidly achieved by the voluntary suffering of the few than by any other effort. Again, even if Mass Disobedience were the one and the only way to success, the best training for a successful carrying on of such a campaign is the gradually increasing number taking to Individual Disobedience. The best way to convince ourselves of all this is by a personal visit to various jails. The purification and national strengthening can then be better felt than by any amount of explanation.

4.3.22.

Saturday. The fever has not yet left me. I spent a bad night. I changed to the third room in the ward where the Tiruvannamalai people wanted me so insistently. They are such fine people. Poor Annamalay Pillay seems to be suffering from asthma or tuberculosis. I don't believe he will stand the rigorous imprisonment for long. I was sitting up the whole night, except for an hour and a half between three and half past four in the morning. The bugs were so dreadful. Otherwise this room would be so comfortable.

5.3.22.

Sunday. Changed again to the first room on account of the bugs I cannot possibly stand another sleepless night, especially with the fever on. For my warm bath I go to the solitary cells block called the "Chinnaganji Ofice" (I can't find out the origin of these terms Chinnaganji and Peddaganji Offices) and try to make use of the latrine also at that time, as it is a haven of privacy compared with the arrangement in Block 1. When I go there I have a feeling of going home. It looks so quiet and pleasant like a country residence by the side of this congested ward where I am now.

Three chatties (with lids) are kept at one end of each of the rooms here for calls of nature from 6 P.M. to 6 A.M. In this respect the place is much the same as the hospital which I have described. The bugs and lice roam about happily. We are locked in, fairly punctually at 6 P.M. We sit in a file of two in front of the room we are to occupy until the Head Warder comes and counts us off and gives the command to "rise and march." Then we march in and are locked in. At a quarter to six in the morning we are asked to "rise." and at six we are let out and we should immediately sit in fours. We should sit in silence till the counting is over and verified, and the bugle is sounded. At 8 we are locked in again and let out only for bath and meals, and once at 2 P.M. for visiting the closet.

6.3.22.

Monday. A boil on my right shin again. So the temporary immunity that I had is over. The 'non-co-operation' cooking is getting on all right. Varadachari, Rama Rao, Sarma and Venkatasubbayya, occasionally assisted by others, do it well. They have learnt the whole business as if to

the "manner born."

7.3.22.

Tuesday. I had my interview for this month yesterday. The Superintendent appears to have become particularly stringent towards me. The interview was specially ordered to be gone through in his own office under his supervision. My brother and boys were brought from the gate. Mr. Krishnamachariar was not permitted. We sat down on mats in the Superintendent's room; the Jailor also sat with us. There was not much to talk about. But, anyway, the Superintendent allowed us only a quarter of an hour, and at the exact minute we stopped. I do not mind all this pedantry. These things add zest to prison life. It is indulgence that spoils our spirit.

I talked to the Superintendent about the Mussalman rigorous prisoners' prayer-clothing and the daily bath for all rigorous prisoners. He directed the Chief Warder to allow every Mussalman rigorous prisoner to take a lungi from their own clothes and use it during their prayers. He also directed that all may be taken to bathe, every evening, instead of thrice a week, the men to draw their own water. So these two matters are, I believe, settled satisfactorily.

8.3.22.

Head Warder Nadamuni has been unjustly punished. It is due to the garrulousness of my friend Mr. Rangam Chetty and the mistaken impression the Superintendent has formed from certain events. I should see that the "black mark" awarded to the innocent man is removed. I have to get at the Superintendent and explain the facts to him.

The boil in my leg has developed as usual into a painful and deep abscess. It was opened this morning. It caused so much pain that, I am ashamed to say, I could not stand it. Seeing me feeling faint, the Sub-Assistant Surgeon gave me some stimulant and dressed it up.

10.3.22.

Friday. A very unpleasant thing happened last Monday. I went to the hospital for attending to my leg once on Sunday evening and again on Monday morning. On Monday morning, as the convict attender Devan was fomenting my leg in the operation room, garrulous Rangam Chetty

came up and stood at the window on the other side and needlessly kept talking to me about the offer of the Superintendent to write for his release on medical grounds. The talk was needless for two reasons, because he knew very well what I thought about it without asking me, viz., that I could not like his going out on any conditions or understanding; again, because he was to be discharged from hospital and coming over to the ward the same day, and there was therefore no hurry to speak to me in the hospital. He asked me why I did not advise him about the proposal to release him. I said that he would have to sign some sort of undertaking if he was to be released on medical grounds, and he replied that he would never sign any such thing. Sometime afterwards, in the course of the day, Rangam Chetty appears to have engaged in a long conversation with the Superintendent on several matters and referred to the undertaking he would have to sign in case of any attempt to release him on medical grounds. The Superintendent asked him who told him about any form of undertaking, and Rangam Chetty said I had told him. The Superintendent was upset at my having had a talk with Rangam Chetty. Strictly speaking, though Rangam Chetty was coming over to my ward the same day, the talk at the hospital was against the prison rules. He asked the chief warder who had accompanied me to the hospital, and the chief warder said I was at the hospital on Sunday with Head Warder Nadamuni. Nadamuni was asked to explain, and in spite of his protestations of innocence, he was punished with a black mark. I was shocked when I heard of this. It was absolutely unjust. The man was with me on Sunday, when nothing happened, and not on Monday morning when my garrullous friend came up to the window and talked to me in breach of a technical rule. I went up to the Superintendent on Wednesday and told him what had happened. He heard me and admitted he had done wrong in punishing Nadamuni and promised to cancel the punishment. Warder Nadamuni is one of the most efficient and well behaved men in this jail, and I should have been extremely sorry to have been the involuntary cause of an undeserved injury to the poor man.

Venkata Rao, a young non-co-operator in prison with us, brought to the notice of the Superintendent that the convict warder at the water pump hit a prisoner with his baton. We all advised Venkata Rao not to make this report, as we had found no good purpose served by such complaints on behalf of the ordinary prisoners. As we expected, the man assaulted denied the assault itself. The jail officials are such a terror that no one is bold enough to complain against them. But I am glad to record that the

Superintendent accepted Venkata Rao's version and punished the warder.

Rangam Chetty has become a chronic invalid. He suffers much from indigstion and chest pains. He cannot stay long in prison, and I hope really that he will be enabled soon to go out honourably.

11.3.22.

Saturday. The most important man among non-co-operators here in this jail is Sreeman K.V. Krishna Rao Garu, the Kumara Zamindar of Gampalagoodem. He is popularly known here as Raja Saheb. He is a fine young gentleman. He has sound commonsense, a democratic temperament, and genuine patriotism and, above all, a true unostentatious piety. Though he belongs to an ancient aristocratic family, he never makes you feel by speech or conduct that he claims to be other than a middle class gentleman. He has made contributions to modern literature in the shape of plays and poems which are appreciated very much. Imprisonment has not broken the spirit or any wise changed this fine aristocrat, except that he has given up smoking, which was probably his ony sin. Mr. K. Srinivasa Iyengar was a teacher for a number of years in Pachaiappa's at Madras, and then in Nellore. He gave up his post when the Satyagraha movement was started. Thoroughly realising the true principles and objective of the Delhi programme, he has always been a centre of restraint and discipline among the men here. From 208 lbs. on admission he went down steadily till he reached 170 lbs early in March.

Of Shafiuk-ur-Rahman from Aligarh, what shall I say? I count it as a privilege to know such a man. I have not known a better bred young man or a more self-restrained, a more truly god-fearing, finer or nobler soul. He and his friend Md. Hussain are the best type of Indian Mussalman citizens whom the young men of all communities in our colleges and schools might well take for models. Madapusi Narasimhachar, Vakil of Guntur, a recovered consumptive, is another fine type among the many contributions which Andhra has made to the National Army. He is the most active, though the thinnest and weakest of us all, as strong in spirit as he is weak in flesh. He learnt to read and write Tamil in the course of a few hours.

Of C. Subba Rao I need not write again except that my closer acquaintance has only increased my estimate of him. Fatch Khan Md. Ghouse is a fine type of the well-balanced, steady and strong non-co-operator that the movement wants in larger numbers than I think we are

yet fortunate enough to count.

Chanda Mean Sahib, the tailor of Chittoor and Abdulla Badsha Sahib of Vellore are of the same fine type. Abdul Wahab of Tirupattur has a somewhat aggressive spirit, which affects his judgment sometimes, but he is fast shedding it.

Tiruvannamalai has contributed quite a number of fine young men to our company, whose temper, amiability, and brave spirit are a credit to Tamil Nadu.

Learnt that Montagu resigned, it is said, over the Turkish question. Orders have been issued, it is clear, to arrest Gandhiji.

12.3.22.

Sunday. We had news of a vague sort at first, which was definitely confirmed at noon to-day, that Gandhiji was arrested. The news was received fairly calmly, and we resovled on a 36 hours fast and prayer. We had joint Hindu and Mussalman prayers in the evening in the open air. The other convicts in our block instinctively came and joined us in the prayer.

13.3.22.

We had prayer meetings to-day in the morning, noon, and again in the evening, just before we broke our fast.

The Inspector-General came and visited our jail and passed through our room also. He thinks butter-milk to all the convicts would be a luxury, something like whisky to the European, and that the unhusked dal is very nutritious. When I said that the nutrition theory may be right, but there was also the irritation of the bowels with it, and the net result might be bad, the Superintendent appeared to agree, but the I.G. was still in favour of the whole dal, for the introduction of which in jail diet, I am told, he was responsible.

Montagu appears to have resigned over the question of the publication of the Government of India demand for the solution of the Turkish question, without the whole Cabinet's permission or knowledge.

What is the country going to do now after Gandhiji's arrest? All the big leaders are now in prison. We have none to look to but the God of Nations for guidance and support.

I did not imagine that my release at the end of this week would be such a "Dead Sea fruit." What can I do outside, with every fellow worker and

Mahatmaji in prison? I wish my term had been longer.

15.3.22.

I saw a group of young men, about twenty in number, probably students, being taken round the jail workshops. Of course, I could not speak to them without breaking prison rules. I contented myself with returning their salutations from a distance.

It is a said thing to observe that a few of us have not yet got over the evil habit of smoking. They are not the more responsible or important men among us, but whoever they may be, the double shame of it, being a breach of prison discipline as well as an evil habit unworthy of non-co-operators in the front line, is naturally felt by all. Either they have made no honest attempt to give it up, or the habit of smoking when once acquired, is too strong to withstand temptation, of which there is abundance in the jail. Food obtained by stealth, or by begging, or even by saving by starving oneself occasionally, is sold by the vast majority among the convicts in return for tobacco. You cannot sit down in the latrines for any length of time without hearing some talk about it. I hear, and I do not disbelieve it, that a regular business is carried on in beedies inside the jail in spite of all the restrictions. Some of the weaker brethren among non-co-operators have fallen victims to the temptations which thus surround them.

As a result of a query from Government in regard to what appeared in the *Swarajya*, wherein Mr. Ramasamy Naicker stated to a newspaper interviewer that he had seen me in the jail and that I did not "appear pleased" with the Bardoli resolutions, new regulations have been made as to interviews with non-co-operators in prison. The person applying has to address the District Magistrate or the Superintendent of Police and get permission. This of course means vexatious inquiries into the policies and character of the applicants, secret office notes and objections and arbitrary orders, and great delay in every case.

16.3.22.

Thursday. Md. Hussain of Trichinopoly and Abdul Badsha of Vellore have been brought over from the close prison to this block. I am glad Mahomed Hussain has been put here, as I requested. He is still the same restless spirit. I hope he will not create trouble. Abdul Badsha is the ideal tempered and fine non-co-operator that he always was.

17.3.22.

Friday : Nainamalai Konan was hanged this morning. A young fellow of 19 or 20 years of age.

Now that I am in "touching distance" of my discharge from jail, I may record that these three months that I have spent here have been one of the happiest periods of my life. The last twenty days that I have been here in the non-co-operators' block has indeed been an uninterrupted period of enjoyment that has passed away like a single day -- especially since the four rooms were all converted into one single general ward by opening up the archways. The place has become more like a college hostel, reminding us of the happy days of youth, and we have hardly felt that it was a prison. Ever since the first week of February, the behaviour of the jail officials, from the Superintendent downwards, has been marked by courtesy, kindness, and consideration, and every reasonable convenience has been arranged for us. I wish that all Superintendents of jails were like Major Anderson. He is kind and considerate, not because he is instructed to be so; but on the contrary, any limitations that we find in his liberality of conduct are due to interference from above or absence of scope in the Codes and rules. Of the Jailor and Chief Warder, I am proud to say that there has been a wonderful change in their character. I have nothing but the most grateful and kindly thoughts for one and all of the officials in this jail. All the harsh thoughts that I may have nurtured and recorded in this journal about any of them have worn off and replaced by friendly and pleasant feelings, and if I have not actually scored out anything I wrote, it is only that a fairly accurate picture of my life and thoughts from time to time may be preserved. I regret many of the unkind and uncharitable thoughts that I allowed myself about these unfortunate jail officials without giving them a sufficient chance to change their attitude or create a better understanding between us.

These twenty days have been an opportunity for me to come in the closest contact with some of the best Andhra types. It has been my great privilege to live day and night with these men who have made such great sacrifices, and to know them more intimately than I could have ever known them by meeting them in the outer world.

I had a talk with the Superintendent this afternoon, something of the nature of a goodbye. I see that he is not given a free hand to deal well with political prisoners. In fact, while he is asked to show liberality and sympathy towards them, he is at the same time asked to *keep within the*

rules regarding ordinary prisoners, so that the liberality and sympathy come to mere words.

Went to the carpet making workshops in the jail. It is a wonderful and pleasing sight to see the 'thieves and robbers' working up the patterns to the overseer's song. 18.3.22.

Took leave of Hira Singh and Nidhan Singh. Promised to write to Hira Singh's brother Ram Singh.

I am very glad that the Superintendent's promise to look after Shafiuk's health has borne fruit. He will get two eggs and a pint of milk besides wheat chappaties.

Four of the non-co-operators have gone to work in the Printing Press. It could be a very good thing if the young men utilise their time in prison for learning some trade. Mahomed Hussain of Trichinopoly (who has come over to this block) wants to go to the carpet workshop. The bulk of our friends have been doing nothing but wool-picking, which work is given to them as it is light. Subba Rao is strenuously learning weaving.

Sunday. Out of the Income-Tax paid for 1920-1921, a refund of Rs. 211-11-0 has been intimated to me by the Madras Collector of Income-Tax. 19.3.22.

I have come to the last day to be spent in this place. Every one, fellow politicals, convicts, convict-warders, overseers, jail warders, jail officials, Superintendent, all have been so kind, loving, and considerate that indeed I feel the parting really as a painful event.

Monday. Learnt that Pilate gave six years S.I. to Christ. God gave us a man to lead us, but the Government claim the right to take him away from us. Their will be done! 20.3.22.

Bade farewell to the friends and left the jail at about 10 A.M. The Superintendent followed me outside the gate and asked if the jail did not look bettter from outside. Of course I said the inside was not so bad as it was thought to be. "Don't come again", he said, as we shook hands and parted. Mr. Singaravelu Chettiar and Ramasami Naicker had come from Madras to meet me. In Vellore town the *Swarajya* Correspondent attempted to interview me. I told him that having just come from jail I had to learn about the situation and could not presume to instruct others so soon. They had a public meeting in the evening; but I refrained from speaking, for the same reason.

Calendar of Events in Rajaji's Life.

10.12.1878	Birth
1889	Leaves Hosur School
1891-97	Bangalore. High School and College education.
1897	B.A.
1898	Marriage; Mother's death
1899	B.L.
1900	Begins practice of Law at Salem.
1901	Starts with friends the Salem Literary Society, Member, Salem Masonic Lodge.
1902	Eldest son born.
1904	Second son born.
1906	Elder daughter born; Attends Calcutta Congress as delegate.
1907	Attends Surat Congress as delegate.
1909	Visits Subramanya Bharati at Pondicherry. Third son (Sri C.R. Narasimhan) born.
1910	Social Reform Conference in Kurnool. Hears of Gandhiji.
1911	Member, Salem Muncipal Council.
1912	Second daughter (Smt. Lakshmi Devadas Gandhi) born.
1915	Wife's death.
1917-19	Chairman, Salem Municipal Council, National Association formed with Rajaji as Secretary. Bombay Special Congress. Helps drafting main resolution.
1919	Moving to Madras. Gandhiji visits Madras as Rajaji's guest.
1920	Joins Gandhiji's Movement for Freedom.
1921	Death of Elder Brother and Father.
21.12.1921	First imprisonment.
1922	Editor, "Young India : Leader, "No Change Group".
1924	Belgaum Congress Member. All India Sarva Seva Sangha founded by Seth Jamnalal Bajaj.
1924-30	Tiruchengodu Ashram.
1930	Secretary, Prohibition League of India. Vedaranyam March and a nine months sentence.
1932	Helps in shaping Yeravada pact. Temple entry movement.

1937-39	Prime Minister, Madras Province.
1939	Resignation of Office.
1942	Resigns from the Congress on "Quit India issue."
1946	Is taken back into Congress Working Committee.
2.9.1946	Joins Pandit Nehru's Interim Government under . Governor-General Lord Wavell.
1946	Congress-League Coalition Government.
1947	British Premier Atlee's Statement about India.
15.8.1947	India became Independent.
1946-47	Member Central Government.
1947	Governor of Bengal.
30.1.1948	Assassination of Gandhiji.
1948	Governor-General of India.
26.1.1950	Relinquishes Office and instals Sri Rajendra Prasad as First President of India.
	Joins again as Member Central Government later in the year.
1952	Relinquishes Office. Chief Minister, Madras State.
1954	Bharat Ratna
1958	80th Birthday celebrated.
1959	Forms Swatantra Party.
1962	Anti Nuclear Mission.
1971	93rd Birthday.
23.12.1972	Death.

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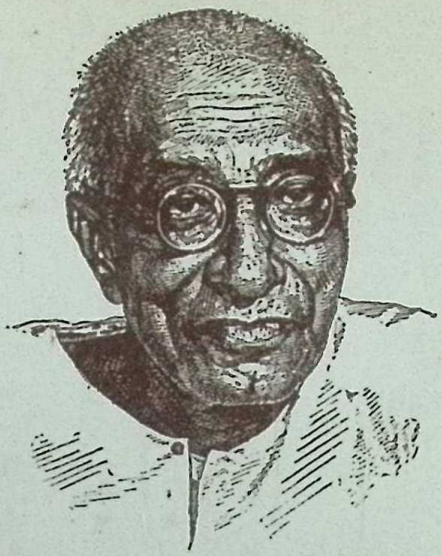
கோவிலூர் ஆண்டவர்
A. No.....
நூலகம், கோவிலூர்



CHAKRAVARTI RAJAGOPALACHARI, popularly known as "Rajaji" or "C. R.," was a great patriot, astute politician, incisive thinker, and one of the greatest statesmen. As a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, as an ardent freedom-fighter, as Chief Minister of Madras, as Governor of West Bengal, as Home Minister of India and as the first Indian Governor-General of India he rendered yeoman service to the country and left an indelible impress on our contemporary life.

On the 14th December, 1921, Rajaji defied the ban on public meetings by addressing a 5000 strong gathering in Vellore and he was promptly arrested and sentenced to three months simple imprisonment.

Rajaji maintained a diary from the day he entered the jail to the day he left — December 21, 1921 to March 20, 1922.

The diary provides a glimpse of the life of a political prisoner in British India and also Rajaji's reflections on contemporary political developments.